

INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN CIVILIZATIONS

(Upto About 1000 A.D.)

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1973

S. CHAND & CO. (Pvt.) LTD.

RAM NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110055

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First Edition—June, 1972

Second Edition (Revised & Enlarged)—1973

Price : Rs. 10.00

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

Though there exist a number of good books on the study of the Asian civilizations, there still exists much scope for the presentation of their contents so as to develop their easy understanding at lower levels.

In the present book we have made such an attempt. In it after giving exhaustive contents of the Asian Civilizations, we have tried to explain the bearing of those matters on human life in the world.

To carry out this task, we have depended much upon the works of eminent scholars in Asian History—especially whom we have mentioned in the Bibliography. We are very much grateful to them.

We would be grateful to the teachers in History for their suggestions to make our book of greater service to the students.

We are thankful to our publishers, S. Chand & Co. (Pvt.) Ltd., Delhi, for having completed the task of printing this book nicely and in time.

Bombay,
17th June, 1972

Authors



PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

We are happy in having an opportunity to bring out the **Second and Revised** edition of the "**Introduction to Asian Civilizations.**" We are particularly glad about it as it has given to us a desired chance to clarify our point of view with which we have written our text-book.

At the outset, we would like to make it clear that we have written this text-book on the basis of the general agreement which prevailed between the members of the meeting of the Board of Studies in History and Archaeology of the University of Bombay who passed the Syllabus of the "**Introduction to Asian Civilizations**" for the F. Y. Arts. The general understanding of the members of that meeting about the teaching of this paper was to the effect that we have to teach the items of the Syllabus of the "**Introduction to Asian Civilizations**" by taking a Civilization as a unit for our study. They felt that we should study the different items of a civilization together and in a connected form. They did not feel that we have to teach and study the items of the Asian Civilizations in the serial order in which those are stated in the syllabus.

The members had this understanding because the civilizations whose study is now prescribed for the F. Y. Arts, formerly formed a part of the Syllabus of World History and those were taught by us to the Intermediate classes by regarding a civilization as a unit of our study.

In this connection it is pertinent to note that a Syllabus does not compel a teacher to follow a particular way or system to teach its contents. A Syllabus is a list of items whose knowledge the students are expected to develop at a particular level of their career. A teacher can teach the items of a Syllabus in the order he likes and with a point of view which he holds about the analysis of those items. This is proved by the fact that we teach the paper of the "**Outlines of Ancient Indian History and Culture**" at the F. Y. Arts on the basis of the periods of Ancient Indian

History and not on the basis of the serial order of its items of study given in its Syllabus.

Since we have this freedom of choice in the system of study and the methodology of teaching, we have adopted a civilization as a unit of study in our text-book. We have presented the analysis of the contents of that civilization in a connected form even though those contents appear in the Syllabus of the **Introduction to Asian Civilizations** under different headings.

We have followed this methodology in our text-book because from the point of view of scientific historical analysis we feel that a paper which is initially meant to give introductory knowledge of the contents of Asian Civilizations to the students of a lower class like the F. Y. Arts—many of whom have not studied History systematically up to that stage—must be taught in a manner by which they can grasp properly its contents. We believe that teaching all the contents of a civilization together and in a connected form is scientific and more proper because that gives a complete picture of the various achievements of that civilization in an easy and comfortable manner to a student who is initiated to the study of History at a College level. In that, since it is a case that from one activity of the people of a civilization their other activities have developed, it is better that we study all those matters in a connected form and by that know properly the bearing of those activities on each other. Such a study of those matters will reveal to us the real spirit and the idealism of those civilizations.

We feel that the teaching and study of those matters in a disconnected form and in the serial order of the items of the Syllabus of the **"Introduction to Asian Civilizations"** will not develop the required and expected grasp of the students about the spirit and the idealism of the Asian civilizations.

In this edition, as was in the first edition, we have covered all the items of the Syllabus of the **"Introduction to Asian Civilizations"**.

We are very much grateful to our several friends, who, with keen interest, offered meaningful suggestions to improve our book. In that respect, we specially thank our friends, Prof. B.M. Lalwani; Prof. Jagjit Sing; Prof. Dalip Sing; Prof. (Smt.) T. K. Garewal; Prof. Nabab; Prof. Yusuf Khan; Prof.

(Smt.) Ghugre; Dr. (Smt.) Mathur; Prof. (Kum.) Dosa; Prof. P. V. Shelar; Dr. S. D. Gaikwad; Prof. Yadav; Prof. Deshpande; Prof. Ganacharya; Prof. (Kum.) F. D'souza; Prof. D. L. Naik; Prof. M. M. Pendse; Prof. Kambli; Prof. A. R. Kulkarni and Prof. (Kum.) Zarina Bamji.

We shall be very much happy to receive suggestions from the teachers of the Asian Civilizations for the improvement of the next edition.

Our publishers, S. Chand & Co. (Pvt.) Ltd., New Delhi, have done an excellent work to bring out the Second edition of our book. We thank them very much.

Authors.

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SYLLABUS

INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN CIVILIZATIONS (Up to about 1000 A.D.)

SECTION I

- (1) **Beginnings of Human Civilization ; The Riverine Cultures :**
geographical setting, ethnic and social composition ; Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, Ancient India.
- (2) **Development of Government.**
Egypt, Babylonian ; Assyrian and Chaldean empires ; Persian empire ; Aryavarta, Mauryan and Guptan empires, Arab Polity.
- (3) **Asia—Cradle of World Religions.**
(Knowledge of origin and principles of each religion will be expected).
Religious practices in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia ; Judaism ; Zoroastrianism ; Vedic religion ; Brahmanism, Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism ; Confucianism and Taoism ; Shinto, Christianity and Islam.
- (4) **Art and Architecture.**
Concept of Art, Architecture, Town Planning in the various civilizations of Asia, relationship between art and religion.
- (5) **Asian Contribution to Science, Mathematics and Medicinæ.**
Survey of important contributions of Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China ; Contributions of the Phœnicians and the Arabs with reference to their role also as transmitters of such contributions to the Modern World. Asian Systems of medicine.
- (6) **Asian Treasury of Literature.**
Art of writing, Forms of Literature ; acquaintance with some significant works of Literature including the Ramayana and the Mahabharata ; The Jatakas, The Panchatantra, Kalidasa's Shakuntala, The Chinese Classics ; The Old Testament, Arabian Nights, Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.
- (7) **Spread of Religions and Culture.**
Spread of Buddhism in Asia ; Expansion of Indian Culture (art, architecture, religion and literature) in Central Asia and Southeast Asia ; Chinese Influence in Korea, Japan and Vietnam ; The Spread of Islam in West Asia, North Africa, Iberian Peninsula. India and insular Southeast Asia : Expansion of Apostolic Christianity.

1

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY OF THE ASIAN CIVILIZATIONS

OUTLINE

- A. Civilizations Developed First in Asia
- B. Asian Civilizations Gave Religions to the World
- C. Asian Civilizations are the First to Establish Sciences and Arts
- D. Asian Civilizations are the First to Establish Human Institutions
- E. Study of Asian Civilizations Gives Knowledge of Asian Mind and Aspirations

A. CIVILIZATIONS DEVELOPED FIRST IN ASIA

Archaeological evidence suggests that the world is inhabited by Man since fifty thousand years B.C. From that period onwards Man has put in efforts to satisfy his physical and spiritual needs in the world. Those efforts have resulted into the establishment and development of human organizations in the world.

Out of the people of the different parts of the world, it was in Asia that human beings could make a beginning of civilized life in 5000 B.C. The people of the other parts of the world also made a beginning of their civilized life through their civilizations. But those civilizations are of a later period to 5000 B.C. Asian civilizations like the Egyptian, Mesopotemian, Indian and Chinese, which flourished in the period of 5000 B.C., are therefore the oldest civilizations in the world.

It is therefore necessary to study Asian civilizations if we are interested to know the original and basic ideas of man to live civilized life and organize human institutions in the world.

B. ASIAN CIVILIZATIONS GAVE RELIGIONS TO THE WORLD

It is the peculiarity of the Asian civilizations that at an early period of civilized activity of human beings in the world they

produced different religions. The Asians established and developed the important religions like Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam which have guided the spiritual life of men all over the world since ancient to the present times.

The practices of those religions have underwent changes in different periods in the light of the growth of human intelligence and experience. If now we want to know the basic ideas and philosophies of those religions, it is essential for us to study the Asian civilizations.

C. ASIAN CIVILIZATIONS ARE THE FIRST TO ESTABLISH SCIENCES AND ARTS

Since the Asian people lived a civilized life earlier than the people of other parts of the world, they were the first people to lay down the foundations of different sciences and arts.

The Asians developed sciences like medicine, chemistry, physics, astronomy, mathematics, etc., which the people of the other countries of the world learnt from them.

Similarly, the Asians developed architecture and art of writing which others happened to learn from them. The Asians also developed the arts of sculpture and painting at the early period of their civilized life.

All these matters were learnt by other people in the world from the Asians. The people of the other civilizations made improvements in the Asian stock of knowledge in different sciences and arts.

If we are interested in knowing the basic ideas and aims of the Asian people in different sciences and arts, the study of their civilizations becomes essential.

D. ASIAN CIVILIZATIONS ARE THE FIRST TO ESTABLISH HUMAN INSTITUTIONS

Historical evidence shows that it was in the Asian civilizations that for the first time in the history of Mankind the political, social, economic and religious institutions were established.

Since the Asians were the first people to develop civilized life, they were required to settle the problems of human relationship, methods of productions and following up of religious beliefs in the course of their life. The efforts of the Asians in those directions resulted in giving the world their political, social, economic and religious institutions.

From the human institutions developed by the Asians in the ancient age, the people of Europe learnt many matters to organise their course of life in the time to come.

E. STUDY OF ASIAN CIVILIZATIONS GIVES KNOWLEDGE OF ASIAN MIND AND ASPIRATIONS

The Asian countries have become largely free from the political bondage of the western countries since 1945 A.D. Since that time onwards, the Asian countries are making efforts to reconstruct their political, social, religious and economic institutions.

These countries which have a glorious tradition of brilliant achievements in the past have a bright future if they manage their national affairs on the values of human life which their ancient civilizations have propounded.

In this context, it is necessary for the peoples of all the Asian countries to put up a joint effort to cause the upliftment of Asia and give it a bright future. This can be achieved only when we know the basic ideas of the ways of life of the people of all the Asian civilizations. The study of the Asian civilizations will give us a proper understanding about the basic ideas of the life and aspirations of the people of Asia.

When all the Asians will know each other's mind and will work together to solve the complicated problems of human life in the world, Asia will be a land of glorious achievements once again.

2

PALEOLITHIC AND NEOLITHIC AGE ACHIEVEMENTS OF MAN

OUTLINE

- A. Archaeological Data of the Races of Man in the Early World
 - B. Achievements of Man in the Paleolithic Age (50000 B.C.-15000 B.C.)
 - C. Achievements of Man in the Neolithic Age (15000 B.C.-5000 B.C.)
-

A. ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA OF THE RACES OF MAN IN THE EARLY WORLD

Though it is an established fact that Man is dwelling in the world since the period of 50000 B.C., it has not yet been possible to know as to in which part of the world he was born first.

The remains of Man belonging to the Paleolithic Age have been traced by the archaeologists and anthropologists in different parts of the world. With the help of those remains, they have come to the conclusion that the early men were of different type of physical structures and features. By comparing those remains with the different types of human beings found in the world in later times and by taking into account the areas where the earliest remains were found, the anthropologists have stated the ideas about the early races of Man and the parts of the world where they were settled.

The early races of Man and the areas of their origin as suggested by the anthropologists are as under :

- (1) **Indo-European Race.** In Central Asia, i.e., territory between the Black Sea and the Caucasus mountain.
- (2) **Semitic Race.** In the deserts of Arabia.
- (3) **Mongolian Race.** In the regions of Mongolia.
- (4) **Austriac Race.** In the territories of South East Asia.
- (5) **Negroid Race.** In the area of Central Africa.

(6) **Mediterranean Race.** In the parts of Southern Europe near the Mediterranean Sea.

(7) **Dravidian Race.** In India.

Studying the sites of the habitation and the tools and material used by the men of the above areas in the Paleolithic Age, the historians have constructed an account of their achievements. These achievements are regarded as most important as they laid down the foundations of human civilization and culture in the world.

B. ACHIEVEMENTS OF MAN IN THE PALEOLITHIC OR OLD STONE AGE (50000 B.C.-15000 B.C.)

The word 'Paleolithic' of the Greek language indicates the earliest stage of human life when Man used crude and rough stones as tools.

On the basis of the knowledge derived from the science of Geology the historians regard that there existed thick forests and wild animals in the world during the Paleolithic Age.

As Man possessed a peculiar brain, which thinks, feels and imagines, he started putting to use the things created around him in the world by Nature, to secure safety for his life and food to satisfy his physical needs.

(i) **Food.** Since the Man of this Age is seen to have known about the use of fire in its closing period, it is held by the historians that he subsisted on the raw fruits and roots of the trees and plants found around him in the forest.

(ii) **Tools.** There was a necessity for Man of this period to protect himself from the attacks of the wild animals who dwelt alongwith him in the forest. To defend himself from the wild animals, it is thought that he must have thrown at them the crude stones he found around him, whenever those animals attacked him. The hurt caused by such stones to the wild animals seems to have given him the knowledge to hunt birds and other smaller animals with the help of throwing stones at them. By hunting the birds and small animals, Man of this Age seems to have obtained their flesh for his subsistence. Many of such bones of the birds and small animals and the smaller crude stones have been found at the sites of the Paleolithic Age.

Due to this activity of Man, the historians regard that in this Age he lived a hunter's life. To obtain the flesh of the animals,

he went from place to place to find them and hence lived risky and wanderer's life. Throughout this period, man is found to have been making efforts to produce pointed and sharp stones of different sizes. By the end of this age, man had developed his activity to polish and make the stones of different sizes having sharp edges.



Stone implements representing the various phases of the Paleolithic or old Stone Age in Western Europe.

(iii) **Shelter.** In his wanderings whenever he met with the danger of the attacks of the wild animals and whenever he wanted

to keep himself safe in the dark of the nights, he seems to have climbed the trees and resided on their tops. This was because Man had a better capacity to climb the trees than the animals in the world. By the period of 20000 B.C. men seem to have resided in the caves by driving out from them wild animals with the help of other men alongwith whom they lived a group life.

(iv) **Group Life.** As man of this Age wandered from place to place to hunt animals and birds, he seems to have come in contact with other human beings who were dwelling in the world in different areas. This seems to have ended his phase of an earlier lonely life. It is felt that men of this Age came together as they understood by experience that with the help of others they could kill bigger animals easily and could face effectively the attacks of the wild animals.

The formation of the groups of human beings and their group life as a result of their coming together is proved by the archaeological data collected by the historians from the Paleolithic Age sites of human habitation. In them larger stock of the remains of the human beings, the stones used by them and the bones of different animals are traced.

(v) **Development of Speech.** The coming together of men to live a group life seems to have developed a necessity for them to communicate to each other their thoughts, feelings, ideas and actions. The study of the Anthropologists pertaining to the skeletons of the men of the early Paleolithic Age reveals the fact that they were not able like us to speak the words fully well. Their organs of speech seem to have developed gradually in the succeeding years of that age and they seem to have acquired the skill to speak like us by the close of the Paleolithic period. From this, it is felt by the historians that in the early years of the Paleolithic Age, men seem to have produced throaty voices and additionally with the help of making signs about the ideas in their mind, they communicated with others. This effort on their part seems to have led to the growth of their ability to speak effectively and side by side with it developed meaningful words of definite pronunciation to convey the ideas and thoughts in their minds to others in a common manner.

(vi) **Art of Painting.** Alongwith the above efforts, men of this period seem to have taken recourse for their communication with others, to draw pictures of animals and men and women on

the walls and ceilings of their residential caves. Such pictures of the animals are traced in the caves of **Altamira** in Spain. They belong to the period of 20000 B.C. Of the same period, the pictures of men and women are found in the cave belonging to the type of men called as the Cro-magnon at Dordogne in France. These paintings are of higher skill and are regarded as the early proofs of man's efforts in the direction of evolving a script for his writing in the world.

(vii) **Clothing.** Nature has not given man a skin which is thick and of fur or feathers just as is possessed by the animals and birds to protect themselves from the adverse effects of cold, wind and rain in the world. But Nature has given a peculiar brain to Man with the help of which he has devised measures to protect himself from the adverse effects of cold, wind and rain. In the early Paleolithic Age man seems to have secured the protection of his body with the use of the covering of tree leaves and after some period of time by the bark of the trees. It is thought that by the ending phase of this Age, he used the skin of the animals he killed to cover his body. This is regarded as an early step of Man in the world to effect his progress in the direction of manufacturing cloth and clothes to secure protection of his body and give it comforts.

(viii) **Disposal of the Dead.** It is thought by the historians that the working of the forces of Nature of the world, the efforts of Man who was ill-equipped in this period to prohibit their effects on his life, the birth and death of human beings continuously going on in the world, etc., struck an awe in the mind of human beings of this Age. In their that way of life, they seem to have formulated some ideas about the Natural forces and the unseen power which caused their operation on our planet. Since man had not invented and practised the art of writing during this Age, it is not possible to know their ideas in those matters. But the method of the disposal of the dead bodies followed by them indicates some of their ideas about the life of man after his death.

The sites of this age excavated by the archaeologists reveal that the bodies of the dead were laid to rest below the ground along with the material like the crude stone tools used by the dead when he was surviving. From this, it is inferred by the historians that those people seem to have entertained some form of belief about the life of man after his death. It is felt that these

ideas provided roots for the beliefs of the religious matters which mankind developed later in the world.

(ix) **Knowledge of Fire.** By the time of the closing period of this Age, men seem to have gathered the knowledge of fire, mostly from the wild fires which break out generally in the Summer due to the blowing of gusty winds. The archaeological evidence from the sites of human habitations of this age indicates that men used their knowledge of fire to secure warmth for their bodies and to bake the animal flesh. The evidence of the use of fire also shows a change in the pattern of the life of the people of the Paleolithic Age into the conditions of life of the Neolithic Age.

C. ACHIEVEMENTS OF MAN IN THE NEOLITHIC OR NEW STONE AGE (15000 B.C.-5000 B.C.)

The word 'Neolithic' in the Greek language means a stage of the use of "New Stone tools" in the life of Man in the world. Since men are found to have used sharper and polished stones as tools, the period of their activity from 15000 B.C. to 5000 B.C. is called as the Neolithic Age.

The picture of the way of life of the people of this age has been constructed by the historians on the basis of the archaeological data collected from the various sites of human habitation. These sites are found in the parts of almost all the countries which are known to us in the present world. In this age, by his continuous efforts, different ideas and thoughts man not only made his life possible in the world but he also laid down the foundations of his advanced and progressive life in it.

(i) **Use of Fire.** Man of this age put to use the knowledge of fire which he had acquired in the Paleolithic age. Realizing that the animals feel scared about the fire, he used it to drive them out of their caves. After this, he seems to have occupied those caves alongwith the members of his group. The fire was used by him to keep the attacking wild animals away, to secure warmth in the cold climate, to have light during the night time and to cook the flesh of the hunted animals and birds.

(ii) **Agriculture.** It is contended by the historians that while living in the caves the men of this age got opportunity to know about the growth of different plants around their caves during the rainy and subsequent seasons. Through this and due to their spirit of inquiry, men seem to have gathered the knowledge about

edible plants and variety of grains for their subsistence. This knowledge led them to lessen their dependence upon the flesh of the birds and animals. They were no longer required to wander after the animals to hunt them and run risks to their lives. The knowledge of the use of grains for consumption led men to practise agriculture gradually.

The safety which accrued to men due to the use of fire and the practice of agriculture by them increased human population in the world.

(iii) **Domestication of the animals.** As the population of the human groups increased, the members of the group were required to cultivate larger lands in order to obtain more stock of food-grains for their subsistence. This necessitated man to harness the energy of the wild animals like the bull, horse, sheep, buffalo, etc., by taking them for agricultural tasks. Due to this domestication of these animals, man could have their milk and flesh for consumption. Man of this period also domesticated smaller animals like the hen, dog, sheep, goat, pig, etc., and put them to various uses.

(iv) **Polished and sharp stone tools.** By using his (Paleolithic age) knowledge of polishing the crude stones and making to them thinner points and sharp edges, man of the Neolithic age prepared new stone instruments and tools like axes, hammers, pointed stone plates like daggers, etc. By putting wooden sticks in the holes of the axes and the hammers, man of this age became more able to cut the grass, trees, wood, etc. This afforded to him a facility to obtain more wood and grass. With that material, man was more able to use his knowledge of fire and make his life comfortable.

By using sharper stones, man carved the wood logs and preparing out of them small boats and canoes went deep into the big rivers to catch fish. With the help of the boats, man could cross the rivers easily and come in contact with other people.

(v) **Invention of Wheel.** Due to the increase in the number of the members of his group, man of the Neolithic Age needed more grains and more water to be stored than earlier. It is felt that when the man of this age was struggling to create storing facilities, he thought about an idea to prepare earthen pots with the help of the mechanism of a wheel. The invention of wheel led man to prepare different types of pottery to serve various

purposes like cooking food, storing water, grains, etc. By the closing period of the Neolithic Age when man thought and practised the mechanism of fitting the wheels to the carts drawn by animals he obtained the most remarkable facility to travel longer distances without much exertions.

(vi) **Art of Weaving.** As a result of the practice of agriculture and domestication of sheep, man came to know the substances of fibres like the raw cotton, wool, etc. With the help of the fibres of those materials, he manufactured cloth by inventing the mechanism of their spinning and weaving. From the cloth and with the help of the bone needles, man of this age prepared variety of clothes for his use in different seasons.

(vii) **Construction of Cottages.** As the man of Neolithic Age had become much free from the fear of the attacks of the wild animals and as he had started the practice of agriculture on large scale, he seems to have given up by the closing period of that Age, his residence in the caves. The archaeological evidence shows that man of this period settled in the open ground, especially near his agricultural land, by constructing cottages with the help of grass, trees, leaves and wood.

The construction of a number of such cottages in close proximity developed smaller villages.

(viii) **Development of Speech.** The coming together of a large number of human beings in this age, led to the development of different words of speech whose common meaning was in their mind. Gradually, when such words were put together in the speech of men of this period, they formed sentences. Such sentences caused the development of different languages in the world.

(ix) **Religious beliefs.** The men of this age seem to have developed religious beliefs in the powers of Nature and the supernatural power of God. They seem to have started the worship of God during this period. They offered fruits, flowers, food and water to the God to secure his favours.

It is found that on the grave of a person, the Neolithic men erected a tomb of a single stone pillar. Graveyards of this period have been traced in France, Ireland and other countries where groups of such pillars (dolmens) exist.

(x) **Discovery of Copper.** The settled life of man in this

age gave him facility to search more in the material spread around him in the world. It is thought by the historians that it was due to man's spirit of inquiry and his search for the new materials for his use that brought him the knowledge of the copper ores. He seems to have experimented on those ores with the help of fire. That surprisingly yields metal copper for his use by 5000 B.C.

(xi) Development of human relationship and human institutions.

Since the formation of group life in the ending phase of the Paleolithic Age, the human beings seem to have developed their bonds of relationship with each other. The institutions like marriage, family, clan and tribe seem to have developed gradually from the beginning to the end of the Neolithic period.

Those people, who lived in the organization called as a village, seem to have experienced scarcity of foodgrains to support their increasing population by the close of the Neolithic period. Therefore they seem to have migrated from their places of habitation to the lands which were more fertile on the banks of the great rivers. This migration and the causation of the settlements of the people on the river banks seem to have been caused under the direction of the leaders of the tribes. These leaders seem to have been elected by the members of the tribes. Their duties seem to have been to lead the tribes in wars against others and regulate the conduct of the tribesmen at other times. The description in the early literature of different countries of the expulsion of the leaders who did not do their duties as expected by the tribesmen lends support to this view.

MAIN POINTS

A. ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA OF THE RACES OF MAN IN THE EARLY WORLD.

Man is dwelling in the world since 50000 B.C. Anthropologists have given the ideas about the early races of Man and the areas of their origin in the world.

B. ACHIEVEMENTS OF MAN IN THE PALEOLITHIC OR OLD STONE AGE (50000 B.C.-15000 B.C.)

(i) Food, (ii) Tools, (iii) Shelter, (iv) Group Life, (v) Development of Speech, (vi) Art of Painting, (vii) Clothing, (viii) Disposal of the dead, and (ix) Knowledge of Fire.

**C. ACHIEVEMENTS OF MAN IN THE NEOLITHIC
OR NEW STONE AGE (15000 B.C.-5000 B.C.)**

(i) Use of Fire, (ii) Agriculture, (iii) Domestication of animals, (iv) Polished and sharp stone tools, (v) Invention of wheel, (vi) Art of weaving, (vii) Construction of cottages, (viii) Development of speech, (ix) Religious beliefs, (x) Discovery of copper, and (xi) Development of human relationship and human institutions.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Write a note on the early races of Man in the world.
 2. State the achievements of Man in the Paleolithic Age.
 3. What were the achievements of Man in the Neolithic Age?
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3

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION (5000-332 B.C.)

OUTLINE

- A. Rise of Asian Civilizations on the Banks of the Rivers
 - B. Two Views About the Study of History
 - C. Egyptian is the Oldest Civilization
 - D. Importance of River Nile
 - E. Life in Ancient Egypt
 - F. Religion in Ancient Egypt
 - G. Invention, Development and Importance of the Art of Writing in Ancient Egypt
 - H. Science in Ancient Egypt
 - I. Architecture in Ancient Egypt
 - J. Literature in Ancient Egypt
 - K. Art in Ancient Egypt
 - L. Legacy of Ancient Egypt
-

A. RISE OF ASIAN CIVILIZATIONS ON THE BANKS OF THE RIVERS

On the fertile soil of the banks of river Nile in Egypt; rivers Tigris and Euphrates in Mesopotamia; river Sindhu in India, and rivers Yangtze Kiang and Hwang Ho in China: the talented people of those countries laid down the foundations of civilized life.

By 5000 B.C., got settled down on the banks of different big rivers, the tribes of the Neolithic men in Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China, who had migrated to those areas from their distant unfertile lands, for making life possible. Those tribesmen preferred to settle down on the banks of big rivers for different reasons.

Firstly, the rich soil on the banks of the rivers, which was watered constantly by those rivers, showed them the possibilities of having a continuous supply of food and water throughout the year to obtain which they had migrated from their Neolithic sites.

Secondly, in those lands they seem to have visualized a possibility of reaping good returns of grains with less efforts. Such a thing was to make available for them much time to live leisurely, comfortably and devote it in the pursuit of the higher interests of arts, sciences and religion.

After getting settled down on such lands, those people applied their mind to think about the problems of human life, organise the matters of human institutions and further the interests of arts, sciences and literature. This activity of those people resulted in the establishment of the ancient civilization of mankind in Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China.

In other parts of Asia, since the soil is full of hills, mountains, minerals, sandy deserts and forests, the builders of the early civilizations seem to have found it inconvenient to settle down on such lands. For, in such lands it is difficult to cultivate the agri-



cultural crops without the adequate supply of water. In the event of the adequate supply of water, the early founders of the Asian civilizations also seem to have found it difficult to grow the required quantity of grass to maintain their animals. As a result of these reasons and the basic human desire to exert less and procure easily the facilities of comfortable life, the early builders of the Asian civilizations preferred to settle down on the fertile banks of the big rivers in Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China.

B. TWO VIEWS ABOUT THE STUDY OF HISTORY

Though Man is dwelling in the world since 50000 B.C., he is found to be practising the art of writing only from 5000 B.C. onwards. As a result of it, there are no written records for the study of his activity from 50000 B.C. to 5000 B.C. For the study of human activity of this period, the historian has to depend solely upon the archaeological sources like the material used by the people, their houses, castles, etc. As it is in the analysis of history, the archaeological sources are able to give us only the information about the attempts of the people to secure material or physical well-being and the degree by which they had achieved it. The archaeological sources do not give us the information about the ideas of man to live life in the world. Those sources do not reveal to us the matters of human relationship, religious ideas of the people and the rules, regulations, traditions and customs by which their course of life was governed.

Thus it is seen that out of the total activity conducted by man to satisfy his physical and spiritual needs, his activity to satisfy physical needs only can be studied properly with the help of the archaeological sources.

In a way, it is a useful study. From it we can obtain knowledge about the earliest activity of man. On its basis, with the help of some guess work, conclusions can be drawn about his ideas and ways of life. But since those matters are not supported by any written evidence, some historians do not regard those as very much scientific in quality in the work of historical analysis.

According to their opinion, we can have a really competent, scientific and meaningful history of the human actions only from the time of 5000 B.C. onwards. For, from that period to the present time, we have the availability of both the written as well as the archaeological sources to study the efforts of Man to satisfy his physical and spiritual needs in the world.

C. EGYPTIAN IS THE OLDEST CIVILIZATION

Out of the ancient Asian river valley civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China, the historians regard the Egyptian Civilization as the oldest. This is due to their consideration of the art of writing practised by the people.

Some historians regard that the art of writing is the most skilful than other matters of human life. It is comparatively a difficult thing which a people cannot achieve unless they are intellectually a superiorly developed people.

The written records of the Egyptian civilization are available from 5000 B.C. Those records indicate a high degree of civilized life attained by the ancient Egyptians.

The written records available of the other civilizations in the world are of a later period.

Because of this consideration, some historians give first place to the study of the ancient Egyptian civilization in the matters of the analysis of World History.

D. IMPORTANCE OF RIVER NILE IN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES FAVOURING ITS GROWTH

The river Nile of Central Africa is one of the biggest rivers in the world. Flowing from Central Africa through the sandy Sahara desert, its waters meet the Mediterranean Sea in the North.

Had not the water of the Nile flown through the Sahara desert, that entire desert would have become a land which would not have been liked by men to settle in it. But because of the flow of the water of river Nile through it, its area of about 675 miles in length and more than 30 miles in breadth has become one of the richest areas in the world for the purpose of agriculture.

The flow of river Nile not only watered the land of ancient Egypt for all the time of the year, but enriched it by bringing rich deposits of soft soil from the Central African regions and by spreading those yearly with her flood waters on that land. Due to these fresh deposits of soil, the land of Egypt got re-invigorated every year and yielded abundant crops to the ancient Egyptians in return for their less exertions in the fields. Thus fortune was made to smile upon ancient Egypt and the Egyptians by the river Nile.

Since crops could be had with less efforts and in a measure which was more than their needs in a year, the ancient Egyptians, in a surrounding of contentedness, found the required time to employ their talent and energy to the higher and finer pursuits of life. This brought in for the world a rich and precious harvest of knowledge in the light of which the people of different regions of the world enriched their own civilizations. For giving ancient Egypt a position of vantage over other civilizations, in leaving the legacy of knowledge, arts, science and religion for the futher generations of Mankind, the Egyptians were and are very much grateful to river Nile. Realising this about the work of river Nile, which happens to be a source of Egyptian life, Herodotus of Greece, the first historian in the world, called Egypt as **"Gift of the Nile"**. The importance of the river Nile in the life of the Egyptian civilization is so great that it led historians to regard Egypt as **'the daughter of the Nile'**.

In addition to the facilities for good civilized life provided by the river Nile, the other geographical factors also helped the development of the Egyptian civilization. The land of Egypt has to its Eastern side the Red Sea and the Arabian desert. To its Northern side is the Mediterranean Sea. The Sahara desert is to its Western side. The territory of Central Africa, which is full of dense forests exists to the Southern side of Egypt.

These geographical factors which are to the Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern sides of Egypt protected it from the attacks of the outside area people for a prolonged period of its history. For, in the ancient period of human history, when the means of communications had not developed and the development of science and instruments had not taken place, it was nearly impossible for the backward and ill-equipped tribes of outside regions to cross the natural barriers around Egypt and attack it.

This safety from the attacks of others which accrued to Egypt gave its people the necessary atmosphere of peace and prosperity to develop the interests of their civilization.

E. LIFE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Not very much of special importance from the point of view of its legacy is found in the social, political and economic life of the people of the ancient Egyptian civilization which flourished in the world from 5000 B.C. to 332 B.C. In 332 B.C. Egypt was conquered by Alexander the great of Macedonia which is in

Greece. Thereafter, Egypt became a part of his Hellenistic civilization which was different from its own civilization.

(i) **Social Life.** The people of ancient Egyptian civilization lived in a Society which had the classes of people like (a) the nobles, (b) rich merchants and wealthy people, (c) common men and (d) slaves. These classes were not hereditary. The women possessed the right of inheriting property but in other matters they did not have freedom which was enjoyed by men of that society. The lot of the slaves was miserable as they were always put to hard work by their masters.

(ii) **Egyptian Government.** The people of various tribes who had settled on the banks of river Nile were under their leaders. Those leaders ruled over their people and for the conquest of more territory fought wars with other leaders. Their wars resulted in causing the rise of two great Egyptian leaders. Under their rule the population along the river Nile was divided into two different systems of laws of those leaders.

The subjects of those leaders obeyed their authority. The people under each of those leaders worshipped their own God. That god was worshipped by them with their particular rites.

As a result of these matters, there emerged in ancient Egypt, two kingdoms under two different Kings. Out of those kingdoms the one was called as the Upper Kingdom, and the other came to be known as the Kingdom of Lower Egypt on the bank of river Nile.

Under those two Kings of different kingdoms, ancient Egypt presented a picture of a politically divided nation. The people of the two kingdoms constantly fought for political supremacy with each other and disturbed the course of peaceful and civilized life.

(a) **Part played by King Menes in the Development and Government of Egypt.** These disturbed conditions of political life, which were not conducive to the furtherance of the civilized life, came to an end, when the Egyptian leader, **Menes**, conquered both those kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt in about 3400 B.C.

King **Menes**, who is a half-legendary figure in the history of ancient Egypt, is supposed to have founded the Egyptian nation under his united power. He is traditionally regarded as a King, who founded in the united Egypt, a Dynasty of the "Pharaohs".

The **Pharaoh** in the ancient Hebrew language means “a person (King) living in a large house”. In the ancient Egyptian language, the word for that was **Pero**.

After bringing under his power, the territory of the Nile valley, Pharaoh Menes introduced in the life of the ancient Egyptians a body of laws. That made all the Egyptians follow one common system of the way of life and of transactions. This developed in them a sense of political and cultural unity.

Pharaoh Menes also built a new capital at Memphis and maintained in that city his court of great glory and pomp. He gave a distinct turn to the cultural and civilized life of the ancient Egyptians when he taught them “to use tables and couches”. He also introduced luxury and an extravagant manner of life in ancient Egypt.

Pharaoh Menes established in ancient Egypt a well-organized and strong government machinery. This was his most important contribution in the development of ancient Egypt. For, when the course of the activity of all the Egyptian people got directed by the orders of one ruler and one law, it acquired a tremendous force which led the Egyptians to achieve spectacular glory in the different aspects of human life in the subsequent periods of their history.

In the government machinery instituted by Pharaoh Menes in ancient Egypt, the Pharaoh was the head of the Government. The Pharaoh was also the head of the Religion in ancient Egypt. It was believed by the Egyptians that the Pharaoh was the earthly representative of the God Amon-Re (Sun God) which was the chief god in ancient Egypt. Thus in the ancient period, Egypt was under monarchical theocratic and centralized government of the Pharaohs.

Under the Pharaoh existed the **Vazir**. The Vazir was the Prime Minister, Chief Justice and incharge of the Government Treasury.

The Vazir was required to listen to the demands of the subjects and take suitable measures to fulfil those demands.

There existed different officials under the supervision of the Vazir. They were the clerks who took census and also examined and collected the government taxes paid by the subjects.

In ancient Egypt the government did not have a Police Department to maintain law and order in its area. The government used to depend upon the good sense of its subjects to live a moral, virtuous and orderly life.

The life of the people in ancient Egypt was governed by highly developed civil and criminal laws. The laws regulated the ownership and inheritance to the property. The criminals were given severe physical punishments.

In the matters of justice, the ancient Egyptians enjoyed absolute equality before law. The parties at dispute were required to give in writing whatever they wanted to plead before the judge.

To settle the disputes of the people, the Pharaohs had arranged to have judicial courts in the villages and cities. Supreme Courts existed at the capital city. The final court of justice was the Pharaoh himself.

To guide the Pharaoh in the matters of the administration, there existed in ancient Egypt, a **Council of Elders** or **The Great Ones**. It was called as the **Saru** in the ancient Egyptian language. The oldest courtiers in the court of the Pharaoh were its members. Those members served as an **Advisory Cabinet** to the Pharaoh. The Pharaoh could accept or reject their advice and he was free to act in his own judgement.

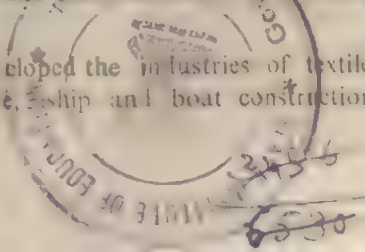
The entire working of the Egyptian government was such that in it the subjects or the common men did not have any share. The subjects were required to carry out the orders of the government implicitly and without any grumble.

During the rule of Queen Hatshepsut or Hatasu (1520-1480 B.C.) and her husband, Pharaoh, Thutmose III (1479-1447 B.C.) Egyptians conquered Palestine, Phoenicia, Syria and Crete and developed their empire. It finally came to an end in 332 B.C. when Alexander the Great of Macedonia conquered Egypt.

(iii) **Economic Life.** The main occupation of the ancient Egyptians was agriculture. The fertility of their lands gave the Egyptian farmers abundant crops and made their life comfortable and rich.

The Egyptian craftsmen developed the industries of textile, metal work, jewellery, furniture, ship and boat construction, pottery, leather work, etc.

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While catering to the wants of their home people the Egyptian craftsmen and merchants exported their wares and articles to countries like Crete, Palestine, Syria, Phoenicia, Aegean Islands, Greece, Rome, etc. This trade was vigorous and brought rich gains to the Egyptians. It made the Egyptian life more rich.

F. RELIGION IN ANCIENT EGYPT

(i) **Religion.** Religion in the life of human beings in the world means their belief in the existence and the power of a God or Gods, involving worship and obedience. It is a system of faith and worship followed by persons in respect of their God or Gods. Religion offers motives, ideas and inspiration to man to live a noble life of progress in the world.

It is thought by the thinkers that the religion has a rise in the world because of a vague sense of awe and mystery with which man looks at the world. What man thought to be as giving life, vigour, health, prosperity, contentment, etc., has been worshipped by him with a sense of gratitude. Together with this, he has also worshipped those matters which cause death, misery, suffering, ill-health, etc., with a feeling of awe about their powers.

To secure the favour of those Gods, man, since the time of his inception in the world, has tried to please them by various means.

On the one hand he evolved the methods of making offerings to the Gods of the material things, which, he believed, they liked. On the other hand, he made efforts to make his ways of life and conduct likeable to the gods.

As a result of these matters, man is found making offerings of flowers, grains, fruits, milk, animal flesh, water, etc., to the gods, by performing ceremonies and rituals. To make himself likeable to the gods, man has tried to live life of virtue, diligence, justice and respect for what belongs to another person. He also developed the idea that if he did not live a life of morality, he will be punished by the gods while he is living in the world as well as after his death.

(ii) **Egyptian Gods and Beliefs.** The people of ancient Egypt had also developed their curious religious beliefs. Those beliefs shaped the course of their life.

The people of ancient Egypt worshipped the natural forces, the river Nile, the sun, animals like crocodile, cat,

snake, different trees, Amon-Re, who was regarded by them as the creator of the world, the Osiris, the god of judgment and who was a spirit of the green life of the earth, and the Pharaohs of Egypt who were regarded by them as the representatives of god Amon-Re on the earth.

As a result of this, in ancient Egypt, the people worshipped as many as 2,200 gods. The people of different localities worshipped different gods in temples by instituting their idols.

For the worship of those gods, the priests of the Egyptian Society evolved elaborate rituals and ceremonies. Instead of giving proper knowledge about the nature and power of gods and morality to the people, the priests made them offer sacrifices of costly materials to the gods in order to escape punishment after death. This made religion a burden to the common men. In that, it failed in its purpose to guide the people on the proper path of morality and spiritual knowledge.

The people of ancient Egyptian civilization had developed curious beliefs for the disposal of the dead.

It is thought by the thinkers that by seeing the constant phenomenon of the rise, blossoming, decay and again the rise of the trees and plants constantly going on in the world, the Egyptians believed that after death their lives also would get resuscitated. The ancient Egyptians believed that after the burial of the dead body, the soul, which had parted from the body of a man after his death, could be recalled by the officiating priest and reunited with it. To serve that critical moment, the ancient Egyptians developed curious measures to preserve the dead body and stop its decay in the world. For this, they followed an elaborate method of embalming with the help of salt, natron, and different oils. Such a body was then filled with pitch (coal-tar, various bitumens, etc.). The Persian word for pitch was 'Mumiai' and hence the embalmed body was called a "Mummy".

For bringing immortality to the bodies, the Egyptians embalmed not only the bodies of the kings but also of others, if they could bear the necessary expenses.

After covering the Mummy in linen cloth, the Egyptians laid it to rest in a coffin box. The coffin box was put in the grave which had a form of a chamber. Over the grave was constructed a stone tomb of conical structure called as a Pyramid by the Egyptians.

As the Egyptians believed that the person buried beneath the tomb might return every day till the time his resurrection had not taken place, his relatives kept food and drink ready for him in the Pyramid. On the walls and ceiling of this room, the Egyptian sculptors and painters drew pictures of the relatives of the dead and of the important and memorable events of his life. They also kept the utensils, furniture, ornaments, instruments, clothes, etc., in the Pyramid, which were used by the dead person.

To keep all these belongings of the dead safe from the robbers, the Egyptians constructed the Sphinx in front of the Pyramid. In their mythology, the Egyptians regarded it to be a wingless monster, having a lion's body and a head of a man or a woman who kept watch on the belongings of the dead placed in the Pyramid. The figure of the Sphinx was carved out by the sculptors.



The Great Sphinx and the Great Pyramids of Giza, Egypt.

Since ordinary persons could not afford to spend large money required for embalming, their corpses were buried with their belongings in the graveyards by the relatives.

The Egyptians believed that after death, their actions were judged by god Osiris in the next world. They believed that every man might rise from the dead if he proved before Osiris that he had lived a virtuous life in the world.

This belief led the relatives and friends of the dead man to put into his coffin a roll of papyrus containing prayers and magical charms which would help him in the next world. Such a roll is given the name as the "**Book of the Dead**" in the modern time.

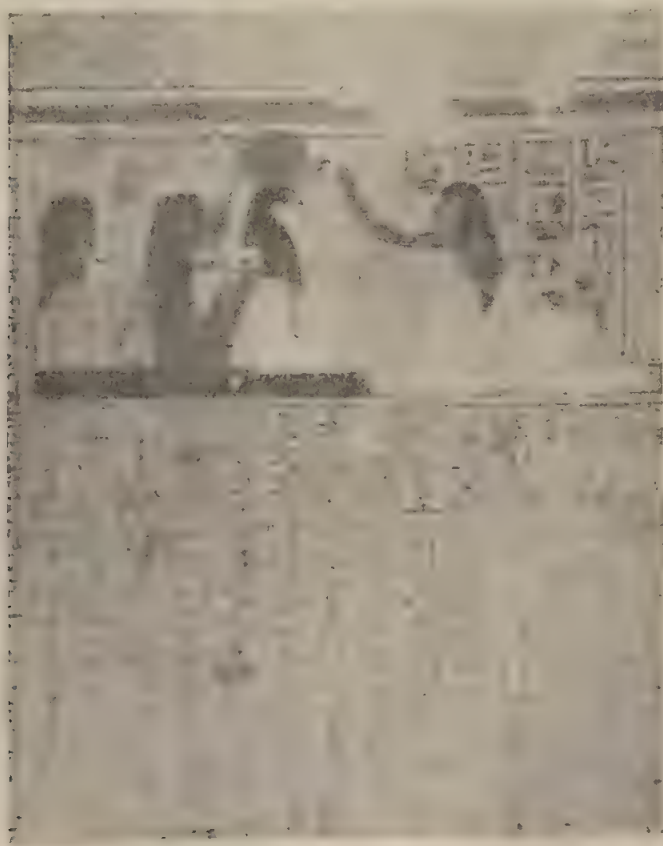


FIG. 1. The Book of the Dead (1250 B.C.). Note especially the image of the deceased man, who is shown in a domestic setting.

In it, the Egyptians had given a catalogue of sins, and the dead man, to prove his virtue, was to tell Osiris that he had not committed those sins in the world to escape the punishment of that god.

As a result of their anxiety to save themselves from the punishment of god Osiris, the Egyptians thought it necessary to possess the "**Book of the Dead**" from the priests. This afforded an opportunity to the priests to charge heavy fees for the sale of the "**Book of the Dead**" and make money.

(iii) **Religious reforms of Amenhotep IV or Ikhnaton (1375-58 B.C.).** To free the ancient Egyptian people from the spell of the curious religious beliefs, idol worship and the domination of the priests, the Egyptian Pharaoh Amenhotep IV introduced his new religion of monotheism (worship of only one God) which was in contrast to the earlier religion of Polytheism (worship of many Gods) practised by the Egyptians.

For living a good moral life, Amenhotep IV asked his subjects to accept his new religion of the worship of only god "**Aton**". By that he preached that they were to worship the power which created the Sun. This power, according to Amenhotep IV, was far more intangible and distant than the dazzling orb of the Amon-Re (sun) which they were worshipping in the old Egyptian religion. He told his people that the "**True God had no form**".

The symbol of this new religion of Amenhotep IV was the Sun's disc, from which there extended numerous rays, but this symbol was never worshipped.

Amenhotep IV was against idol worship. He did not permit the making of any graven image of the "**Aton**". He broke down the conventional thought and urged his people to worship the Aton in a simple manner and by avoiding an excess of ceremonial. Amenhotep IV explained to his people that "**Aton**" was the Father of mankind and called upon them to search for their God "not in the confusion of battle nor behind the smoke of human sacrifices, but amidst the flowers and the trees". He preached human brotherhood and equality for women and told his followers not to believe in the Gods, monsters, devils and the idea of judgment by Osiris of the old Egyptian religion. According to Amenhotep IV, when a man died, his soul continued to exist as a kind of immaterial ghost which could visit the Heaven or Earth whenever it pleased. He did not believe in the idea of the Hell, Azazel-

hotep IV thought that since even the wicked persons were created by God, God would not like to torture them in the Hell. He felt that the only punishment which God gave to persons of wicked conduct was that of their annihilation and after death their spirit ceased to exist.

Amenhotep IV, in his zeal to transform the life of the Egyptians, ordered the closing down of the temples of the old Gods in Egypt. He also ordered his officials to erase from the inscriptions in the temples, the name of the most important and favourite god of the old religion, Amon-Re. To indicate his patronage to the new religion of Aton and disfavour towards the old religion of Amon-Re, he made a change in the name from **Amenhotep** ("Amon is satisfied") to **Akhnaton or Ikhnaton** ("Profitable to Aton"). In his vein to show distaste for the old religion, Akhnaton forsook its chief centre and his ancestral capital city, Thebes and building a new city "Horizon of Aton" (now known as Tell-el-Amarna) went to stay in it. There he composed hymns of praise to god Aton and followed its worship according to his views, alongwith his followers.

All these actions of hostility of Akhnaton towards the old religion chided the age old beliefs and religious sentiments of the Egyptian people. They considered him as an heretic. The priests of the old Egyptian religion hated his new religious reform tremendously, as due to it they had suffered in their prestige and income. They did not accept doctrines of Akhnaton.

When, due to the initiation of the new religion of Aton, Egypt was seething with hatred and discontentment against Akhnaton, the Egyptian empire was attacked by the Hittite people of Asia Minor and the Hebrew people of the Arabian desert. The Hittites conquered Syria and the Hebrews invaded Palestine which were parts of the Egyptian empire.

From practical point of view, it was the duty of Pharaoh Akhnaton to fight against the enemies of the Egyptian empire, which was a result of the conquests of earlier pharaohs and which has caused the economic well-being of the Egyptians through their increased trade and other matters in its different parts.

But Akhnaton did not fight wars against the enemies of the Egyptian Empire. This was because he believed that resort to arms was an offence to god Aton, who was the Father of men of all the races and creation in the world. As Akhnaton upheld

the principles of human brotherhood, he, instead of fighting against the attacking people, hoped to unite the Egyptian empire by the tie of a common religion. This made Egypt pay a high price of losing her dominions in Syria and Palestine for the ideals of Akhnaton.

In these circumstances, when serious dissatisfaction was prevailing in Egypt about the actions of Akhnaton and his religion of Aton, he died in 1358 B.C.

Akhnaton was the first ruler in the history of Mankind who did not wish even to kill his aggressors in war feeling that they were the children of god Aton who had created him also in the world. By preferring to lose the territory of his empire to the aggressors, Akhnaton showed boldness to stand by the interpretation he himself had given of the ideals of the religion of Aton. In this, he was also the first ruler to offer a solution to the problem of the preservation of peace in the world to solve which, mankind has proved unsuccessful up to now. In the world, where we do not find all the people giving up their inclinations of fighting war against others, a ruler is required to be practical in preserving his own state and judiciously follow the policy of avoiding warfare. In this context, Akhnaton was found to be an odd ruler by the Egyptians. He also proved to be a rash religious reformer, who instead of allowing the Egyptians to accept conscientiously his radical reforms slowly, throttled those upon them with the help of his political position. Since in the matters of the change in religious beliefs, people do not like the methods of pressure or force, the Egyptians did not appreciate the religion of Akhnaton even when it was a nobler religion. Due to these matters in the regime of his successor, Pharaoh Tutankhamen (1351-52 B.C.), in Egypt, got reintroduced the old religion.

G. INVENTION, DEVELOPMENT AND IMPORTANCE OF THE ART OF WRITING IN ANCIENT EGYPT

(i) *Earlier Efforts.* The desire of man to communicate his thoughts and ideas to others led him to invent the art of writing.

Efforts of man to invent the art of writing gets indicated on the basis of the pictures he has drawn of animals in the Altamira caves in Spain and of human beings in the Cro Magnon caves in France. These paintings are of the Palaeolithic Age.

But such pictures were not the efforts of man to invent the art of writing as they were painted on the basis of the pictures drawn

even in modern times by the semi-civilized people of Alaska and North America to communicate their messages to each other.

(ii) **Hieroglyphic Script of the Hieroglyphics (Pictures.)** As men had toiled hard during the Paleolithic and Neolithic ages, it became possible for the people of ancient Egypt to invent a systematically developed art of writing in the course of their civilized life.

Historians feel that due to the increase in the production of the agricultural output, the Egyptians in their civilized life were required to attend the need of keeping the record of several transactions. For this, they started drawing different pictures of the material and the actions of the human beings. This resulted in their drawal of over six hundred pictures known as the Hieroglyphics. These pictures stood as symbols for the words of the Egyptian language. This script of symbols is known as the **Hieroglyphic Script** (in the Greek language "hieros" meant "sacred", and "gluphe" meant "drawing"). This script came to be known as the **Hieroglyphic Script** because in it, mostly the matters pertaining to the ancient Egyptian religion were written.

Egyptians seem to have invented the Hieroglyphics of the **Hieroglyphic Script** in about 5000 B.C.

(iii) **Hieratic Script.** The Egyptians then undertook efforts to make the art of writing easy and less complicated. They succeeded in 3500 B.C. in inventing a simple form of script of the signs for the pictures of the earlier **Hieroglyphic** picture symbols. This script of signs could be used for rapid writing of the manuscripts. It was called as the **Hieratic Script** as it was practised largely by the Egyptian priests.

(iv) **Demotic (popular) Script.** Still, the Egyptian script was not such that in it rapidly the writing could be practised. The Egyptians then struggled up to 8th century B.C. and finally invented the **Demotic (popular) script** of 24 letter signs which could be used easily by the common people.

(v) **Material for writing.** In the beginning, the Egyptians inscribed their writing on stone slabs. Since that was a strenuous and time consuming method, the Egyptians gradually started writing on wood planks which were soft.

The wooden planks also did not afford the required facilities to the Egyptians to practise the art of writing with ease and speed.

Therefore, they, after some period, invented the use of the reed, called as **Papyrus** for the purpose of writing. The Papyrus reeds grew in abundance on the banks of river Nile.

The Egyptians split a Papyrus reed into thin strip and after drying them, wrote on them with the help of a reed pen and black ink which they obtained from the mixture of water, gum and soot (soft carbon).

When the Egyptians wanted a larger sheet to write, they pasted the Papyrus sheets together with overlapping edges. This brought in the world the idea of using soft and thin material for practising the art of writing.

From this time onwards, the world started thinking about producing a convenient and soft material to write upon, and manufactured in modern times the material 'paper' which we use and the name for which is derived from the Egyptian word "Papyrus".

(vi) **Spread of the art of writing.** The Egyptian Pharaohs at different times conquered territories of Crete, Palestine, Phoenicia, Lybia, etc. This established the contact of those people with the Egyptians and the matters which had been developed in Egypt. Together with this, the Egyptian and other traders got an opportunity to develop trade in each other's countries. When they all came closer together, the people of other countries learnt the art of writing, invented and practised by the Egyptians.

(vii) **Development of the art of writing by other people.** Out of the above people who learnt the art of Pictographic writing from the Egyptians, the people of Phoenicia, the Phoenicians, developed their own art of writing. From the 24 Egyptian pictures, they developed 22 alphabets of the script. From it, the script of the English language got developed. Later, the Greeks, the people of Greece, who subsequently learnt the writing of alphabets from the Phoenicians, invented the use of 4 more alphabets (e, i, o, u) and gave the world a complete script of 26 alphabets with which we write English.

(viii) **Importance of the art of writing.** The invention of the art of writing is regarded as one of the great achievements of man in the world.

The art of writing has made it possible for man to record his thoughts, ideas, experiments in the fields of science, his experi-

EGYPTIAN	SINAITIC	PHOENICIAN	ARAMAIC	KHAROSHTHI	THULUTH	SABAEAN	BRAMHI	KHULUG	LATIN	ENGLISH
𐀀	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	A	A
𐀁	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	B	B
𐀂	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	CG	CG
𐀃	𐤃	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	D	D
𐀄	𐤄	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	E	E
𐀅	𐤅	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	F, V	F, V
𐀆	𐤆	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	I	Z
𐀇	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	H	H
𐀈	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	(Th)	
𐀉	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	I, J	I, J
𐀊	𐤊	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	K	K
𐀋	𐤋	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	L	L
𐀌	𐤌	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	M	M
𐀍	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	N	N
𐀎	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	X	(X)
𐀏	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	𐤖	O	O
𐀐	𐤐	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	𐤖	𐤗	P	P
𐀑	𐤑	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	𐤖	𐤗	𐤘	(S)	
𐀒	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	𐤖	𐤗	𐤘	𐤙	Q	Q
𐀓	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	𐤖	𐤗	𐤘	𐤙	𐤚	R	R
𐀔	𐤔	𐤕	𐤖	𐤗	𐤘	𐤙	𐤚	𐤛	S	S
𐀕	𐤕	𐤖	𐤗	𐤘	𐤙	𐤚	𐤛	𐤜	T	T

The alphabet.

ence of life in the world, etc., for the knowledge of the people of the succeeding generations. Previous to the invention of the art of writing, all such knowledge and human experience used to generally disappear in the world after the death of persons. Those living and in contact with them, could remember about it faintly and that also used to get lost to the world in a period of few generations. Due to the art of writing such knowledge became available permanently for the people of succeeding generations.

Earlier to the invention of the art of writing people of every generation were largely required to obtain knowledge by way of their own experience and experiment as much less of the stock of knowledge of the same activity of the earlier people was available for them through the agency of human memory. Due to this, much precious energy and talent was lost in repeating the same matters which had been already attempted by the people of the previous generations. As a result of the practice of the art of writing, it became easy for the persons of succeeding generations to know the earlier developed knowledge and on its basis cause its extension. This increased the fresh stock of knowledge in every generation.

The laws, contracts, etc., in written form gave exact meaning to all the people. Written laws, contracts, etc., avoided the confusion about their meaning and content which used to take place in the minds of the people when those were verbal in form.

(ix) **The Rosetta Stone or the Key to Egyptology.** Though the historians possessed vast written source material of the ancient Egyptian civilization, up to 1822, they were not able to read it and obtain through it the knowledge of that civilization. All these sources were written in the **Hieroglyphic, Hieratic and Demotic** scripts which the Egyptians had used in the ancient times. Since no one up to 1822 could read those scripts, those sources remained idle in giving knowledge about the Egyptian civilization.

In 1822, the French archaeologist, J.F. Champollion, gave the knowledge of the reading of those scripts to the world.

He could give that knowledge on the basis of his study of the Egyptian inscription called as the "Rosetta Stone". It is a stone slab on which an inscription in the **Hieroglyphic**, i.e., the sacred script and the **Demotic**, i.e., the popular script in Egypt and the script of the Greek language is engraved.

With the help of his knowledge of the Greek language and of some symbolic pictures of the **Hieroglyphic** script of ancient Egypt, Champollion gave the world the clues to read the ancient scripts used by the ancient Egyptians. Due to this, it became possible for the historians to read the written sources of the ancient Egyptian civilization and give its proper knowledge to the world. Thus, the decipherment of the **Rosetta stone** inscription made it possible for the historians to un-lock the mystery of the ancient Egyptian civilization. Therefore, the **Rosetta stone** is called as a "**Key to Egyptology**".



On the Rosetta Stone is carved a decree of Ptolemy V, King of Egypt around 200 B.C. Part of the stone is missing, but it solved an ancient riddle.

The stone slab having the inscription deciphered by Champollion is given the name as the "**Rosetta Stone**" because it was obtained near the town Rosetta by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798 when he led the French expedition in Egypt.

The **Rosetta Stone** is preserved in the British Museum in England.

H. SCIENCE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Science means a knowledge of facts, laws, and immediate causes, gained and verified by exact observation. It also means the sum total of such observation.

To carry out observations, to collect facts of different matters and to study their results, man needs a settled life which is free from worries and anxiety. The fertile soil on the banks of river Nile afforded such a facility to the Egyptians. The Egyptians took its advantage and employing their talent and energy, laid down the basic foundations of different sciences. Those sciences made the life of the Egyptians comfortable, progressive and advanced.

(i) **The Palermo Stone and the Egyptian Calendar.** Calendar means an arrangement of time into years, months, weeks and days.

The Egyptians were the first people in the world to develop the system of calculating time. The creation of a solar calendar, which is the immediate ancestor of our own, is held by the historians as the greatest achievement of Egyptian science.

It is thought by the scientists that the conditions of urban life led the Egyptians to invent the solar calendar.

The Egyptians measured and recorded each year the height of the Nile flood and watching the movements of the Sun, prepared their calendar.

According to it, a year was of three seasons of four months each. First, the flood of river Nile, second, the period of cultivation, and third, the period of harvesting.

Every month of those seasons was of 30 days. That made the Egyptian year of 360 days. Coming to know through their minute observation of the floods of the Nile and the movements of the Sun that their calculation of the year of 360 days was not accurate, the Egyptians added 5 more days and made the year of 365 days. The 5 more days which they had added were observed by them as the days of festivals.

This was a great achievement of the Egyptians, as their calendar of 365 days which they invented without the help of scientific instruments to observe the heavenly bodies, nearly tallies with the calendar of 365½ days invented by the modern world.

The data of the ancient Egyptian calendar is engraved on the

Palermo stone. That inscription has acquired that name, as it is treasured in the museum of Palermo in Sicily.

On the **Palermo stone**, the Egyptians have inscribed the names of different 700 years starting from 3400 B.C. Those years have been named by the Egyptians after the important events which took place during their time. Because of this, we get historical information about the important happenings in the life of the **ancient Egyptians**.

The data recorded of the calendar system on the **Palermo stone** has revealed that the Egyptians were following it since the year 4236 B.C.

The **Palermo stone** is the oldest written record of man and it gives an idea about the intellectual advancement which the Egyptians had attained in the ancient age.

(ii) **The Shadow Clock.** To measure the time of the day, the Egyptians invented a Shadow Clock in 1500 B.C.

At the end of a flat wooden plank, the Egyptians fixed at some height, another wooden plank in a cross position.

To measure the time of the day, they turned the head of the cross piece toward the East in the morning. This made its shadow fall on the long arm. As the Sun rose higher, the shadow shortened. At noon the head was turned around to the West and the shadow of the remaining part of the day fell on the long arm of that apparatus.

By studying the shadow of the Sun, the Egyptians calculated the day as of twelve hours.

To measure the time of the day, the ancient Greeks adopted the Egyptian Shadow Clocks.

(iii) **Medicine.** The Egyptians took great care of their health to live vigorously and free from diseases. Their interest in embalming the corpses led them to acquire basic knowledge of human body.

To preserve the human body, the Egyptians analysed the properties of different herbs, material and prepared special oils.

The Egyptians had developed the knowledge of the diagnosis and treatment of spinal tuberculosis, gall-stone, smallpox, infantile paralysis, anemia, rheumatic arthritis, epilepsy, gout, appendicitis, etc.

The Papyrus sheets of 1600 B.C. which have been discovered

by Edwin Smith and which are named after him as the “**Edwin Smith Papyrus**” show that the Egyptians were well adept in clinical surgery. In it are given 48 cases of cranial fractures and injuries of the spine which were operated by the Egyptian surgeons.

The Egyptians had discovered several medicines for everything like cold, snake-bite, gastric disorders, different kinds of fevers, etc. For the preparation of the medicines to treat different diseases, the Egyptians used a variety of roots, lizard's blood, swine's ears and teeth, tortoise's brain, fats of different animals, etc.

Many of these medicines passed from Egypt to the Greeks. The Romans learnt those from the Greeks. The use of many of those medicines has come down to us through the Romans.

(iv) **Mathematics.** In the science of the mathematics, the Egyptians had settled the rules of arithmetic which were based on the decimal system used by us.

In the Plane Geometry, they had found out rules to find out correctly the area of a triangle, of a trapezium and of a circle.

With the help of their highly developed knowledge of mathematics, Egyptians designed and constructed the structures of **huge Pyramids and temples.**

(v) **Astronomy.** The Egyptians had not developed any skillful instruments for the observation of planets and stars in the sky. Still, with their keen and minute observation of the planets and the stars, they had collected a vast astronomical data. The Egyptians had made a distinction between the planets and the fixed stars.

1. ARCHITECTURE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

The Egyptians were the greatest builders of the Pyramids and temples in the ancient world. They constructed structures of amazing dimensions with great precision. To construct their gigantic buildings, the Egyptians had developed the sciences like geometry, engineering and mathematics. The progress of the Egyptians in those sciences gets proved on the basis of the study of their following monumental buildings.

(a) **Pyramid of Gizeh.** At Gizeh, the Egyptian Pharaoh Khufu or Cheops constructed in 2500 B.C. a pyramid.

Its area is 13 acres. The base of the pyramid is of 755 feet and its height in 481 feet.

This gigantic pyramid was constructed by using 23 lakhs of stone slabs of which every slab was of heavy weight.

The perfect finish of the construction and the balancing of the weight of stone slabs in conical shape indicates the superb architectural skill of the ancient Egyptians. Due to its vast size and constructional skill, it is regarded as one of the wonders of the ancient world.

(ii) **Temple of Karnak at Thebes.** The Egyptian rulers of different periods have part by part constructed this monumental temple in Egypt.

It is regarded as the largest building of ancient Egypt.



Model of hypostyle hall at Karnak, 1340 B.C. Note the size of the structure compared with the human figure at the base.

The great hall of this building was 338 feet wide and 170 feet deep. Its massive roof was supported by pillars whose height was 79 feet. This hall of the temple at Karnak having pillars is regarded as the greatest pillar hall constructed in the world.

With the help of their architectural knowledge, the Egyptians had constructed the pyramid of Pharaoh Zoser (3150 B.C.) and beautiful and vast temples at Luxor, Amarna, etc.

J. LITERATURE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

(a) **Literature of a Civilization Reflects Its Way of Life and Its Institutions.** Historians regard that the literature of a civilization reflects its way of life and its institutions. They hold that Literature is a mirror of human mind. This is because the author who writes literature is a member of a society and a subject who is governed by the rules and regulations of his nation. Together with this he belongs to a particular religion. For making life possible, he has to work in some profession or industry and earn income. By all these matters he is a person who has formed his opinion about the pleasures and pains of human life in the world. He has also the knowledge about the various difficulties and problems which man has to face while living in the world. Together with this he is a person who has developed his views about the proper and improper course of human conduct, about what is morality, virtue, evil and immorality. In that he happens to have feelings about the good and bad methods of the working of a government which rules over its subjects with the help of its rules and regulations. By the social atmosphere in which the author gets reared up, he happens to develop his feelings of social relationship which exists between the members of his society.

Since the author writes literature with an idea and a motive to give information or knowledge of what he has experienced in the world and what impressions he has formed about the variety of things he has come across; his literature gives us the knowledge of his social, economic, political and religious environment and thereby of his civilization.

The author sometimes writes to give information to others of the Scientific study he has done and about the results of the Scientific investigations he has carried out. This gives to the people of the succeeding generations an idea about the degree of the development of different sciences in a particular civilization at a particular period of time in which the author of such a work lived. The literature written by the author on arts, is also helpful to us in knowing about the development of the arts in his civilization. His literature on travel is instrumental in giving us the knowledge about the contacts which his civilization had with the other countries of the world during his period. Such a literature is of great value. For, it generally gives the knowledge about the trade, products, vegetation, climate and minerals of not only

the author's civilization, but also of other civilizations of the author's period. His works on political organization, laws, religion, philosophy, supplies to us the knowledge about the form of government which his civilization had; the nature of the laws by which the people of that civilization were governed; the religious practices and ceremonies which were observed by the people of that civilization and the religious beliefs entertained by that civilization.

For the historians, who are interested in knowing the details of the life in the old civilizations, such past author's literature is of immense value. For, as the members of the old civilizations have become dead, the only possibility for the historian to know about the contents of their civilization is through their available literature. On the basis of the facts obtained from that literature, the historians can meaningfully interpret the present and to certain extent speak about the future activity of mankind in the world.

(b) **Egyptian Literature (1) Religious Literature.** After inventing the art of writing the Egyptians used it to communicate their ideas, thoughts, feelings and experiences to the other members of their society. As a result of their practice of the art of writing with different motives, a vast stock of literature developed in ancient Egypt.

(i) **The Book of the Dead.** In the religious matters, the Egyptians wrote the literature of the "**Book of the Dead**" which had prayers, formulas and charms to appease the God of Judgment, Osiris.

In that book, instructions were given to the soul by which it was to tell Osiris that it had not committed any sins in the world.

(ii) **The poems and hymns of Amenhotep IV.** They are the most important literature of the new religion of "**Aton**" which Amenhotep IV had introduced in ancient Egypt. In that literature his ideas about God "**Aton**" are elaborately stated.

(2) **Secular Literature.** -**Stories, Dramas, Poetry, Proverbs.** The Egyptians wrote story books to instruct the people. Those stories gave information about the wanderings and adventures of **Egyptian sailors and travellers.**

They also wrote the literature of the dramas, songs and poems, to entertain and enlighten the members of the Egyptian Society.

To make the Egyptians a practical and wise people, the Egyptian writers wrote the books of proverbs. In these books were stated matters of wisdom like, "when you speak, take care of what you say"; "The truth endures evermore. It goes down to the City of the Dead with him who practices it"; and "If a son accepts what his father says, none of his plans will go away", etc.

The Egyptian poets composed love-poems to narrate the experience and feelings of the lovers. In one of such poems, the Egyptian poet has expressed that "the loveliest thing is to go out into the field to meet the man one loves".

Thus the Egyptian literature was rich in giving expression to human ideas, feelings and thoughts.

K. ART IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Art means "the expression of beautiful thought pertaining to, pleasing to, or derived from five senses, in form as in marble, wood", etc. The ancient Egyptians were great sculptors, painters and makers of the works of arts of exquisite beauty.

(i) **Relation of Art to Religion in Ancient Egyptian Civilization.** The ancient Egyptians were largely religious minded people. The sculptors in ancient Egypt used their art to serve the interests of the Egyptian religion. They prepared the images of the various Gods and Goddesses which were worshipped by the Egyptian people. They also prepared statues of their Pharaohs as they regarded the Pharaohs as the representatives of God **Aman-Re on the Earth.**

The Egyptian Painters used their art to further and serve the interests of the ancient Egyptian religion. They painted the pictures of the Pharaohs and different legends to imbibe the spirit of their religion in the mind of the Egyptian.

Some of the details of their activity in the field of the art are as under.

(1) **Sculpture** The Egyptian sculptors had developed a skill of high order to prepare big as well as small pieces of sculpture. This is vindicated from the study of the following statues which are available for scrutiny.

(a) **The Sphinx before the Pyramid of Gizeh.** As stated earlier, in the history of the religion of the Egyptians, regarded the Sphinx as a wingless lion and used it to protect the be-

longings of the dead kept in the pyramid. It had the body of a lion and the face of a man.

The biggest Sphinx in Egypt is the one found opposite to the pyramid of Gizeh.

The figure is 160 feet long. It is about 70 feet high and has a face which is 13 feet and 8 inches wide. Its nose alone is of 5 feet and 7 inches from the crown to the chin and its head is 33 feet long.

The entire Sphinx is carved out of a single stone block. The manner in which the Egyptian sculptors have achieved this gigantic task has left the people of different ages wonder about their skill in sculpture.

(b) **Statues.** The Egyptian sculptors were highly skilled artists. Their outstanding masterpieces are, the fine granite bust of queen Hatsepsut (1501-1479 B.C.) ; the basalt (a fine rock of dark colour). Statue of Thutmose III (1479-1447 B.C.) kept in the Cairo Museum, the limestone statue of Ikhnaton (1375-1358 B.C.), the granite statue of Ramses II (1292-1225 B.C.), a lovely limestone bust of Queen Nefertitti; plaster model of the head of Ikhnaton, etc.

(c) **Sculptures to beautify buildings.** For beautifying the structure of their buildings, the Egyptian sculptors carved beautiful pictures and scenes of their walls.

On the walls of the Egyptian temples was carved out by the sculptors, the scene depicting the arrival of the Hittite princess in Egypt, who was to become the wife of Pharaoh Ramses II.

On the outside of the Great Hall of the temple of Karnak, they carved a number of scenes, out of which the most outstanding in quality and skill is the one which pertains to the battle of Pharaoh Ramses II against his enemies. This scene is 170 feet long.

The Egyptian artists painted such sculptures with bright colours and increased with their help the beauty of the buildings.

(2) **Painting.** The ancient Egyptians were great painters. They drew remarkable pictures of men, animals and natural scenery. To give proper effect to the pictures, they had invented a variety of colours.

They drew pictures on the walls and ceilings of homes, temples, places and pyramids.



State statue of Queen Het-hepset, life size. It illustrates the Egyptian practice of carving from a blocky mass.

Around the pictures they drew borders of simple as well as complex floral or geometrical designs.

The ancient Egyptian paintings are of great importance to the historians. From those pictures we get information about the

ornaments, clothes, vessels, furniture, etc., used by the people of ancient Egypt.

(3) **Minor Arts.** The minor arts are those with the help of which people manage internal beautification of the home, adorn the body and develop the graces of life. The abundance of wealth possessed by the ancient Egyptians made the minor arts in Egypt, its major arts.

The Egyptian craftsmen prepared furniture of exquisite finish. Their chairs were covered with silver and gold.



FAIENCE from an Egyptian tomb (1500 B.C.). They are inserted in a group of ten sorts. Of particular note is their beauty of shape and design.

The weavers in ancient Egypt manufactured rugs, tapestries and cushions which were fine in texture and rich in colour and designs.

The Egyptian workmen produced jewel-boxes, vases and perfume-baskets of minute artistry. The vessels of silver, gold and bronze manufactured by them were pieces of highly developed skill.

The making of the precious ornaments, rings, necklaces, crowns, bracelets, etc., indicates that the ancient Egyptian workmanship had been very skilful.

(a) **The Tomb of Tutenkhamen.** All the specimens of Egyptian workmanship like the furniture, ornaments, vessels, etc., of the period of Tutenkhamen have been traced by the historians in the **Tomb of Tutenkhamen (1353-52 B.C.)**.

In 1922 when the **Tomb of Tutenkhamen** was excavated, the historians found a variety of material of Egyptian craftsmanship stored in it. That material belonged to the period of Pharaoh Ikhnaton and Tutenkhamen. It provided historical proofs to the historians to judge the level of a high degree of civilized life the Egyptians were enjoying under those two great Pharaohs.

L. LEGACY OF ANCIENT EGYPT

Since ancient Egypt was a pioneer in inventing and practising the different sciences and arts, it became much easy for the people of the other countries in the world to follow those matters in the way of their life. When people of Crete, Aegean Islands, Palestine, Syria, Phoenicia, etc., learnt the matters of civilization and culture from Egypt, they developed their own civilization with speed.

Thus the planting and practising of the knowledge of arts and sciences in Egypt, not only made the life of the Egyptian people progressive, but it also made progressive, the life of the people of the other parts of the world.

MAIN POINTS

A. RISE OF ASIAN CIVILIZATIONS ON THE BANKS OF THE RIVERS

Due to shortage of food to support the increased population, Neolithic Age men settled by 5000 B.C. on the fertile soil of the

banks of big rivers in the world ; fertile soil gave facility of good crops and less efforts. Ancient civilization developed on the banks of great rivers in Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China.

B. TWO VIEWS ABOUT THE STUDY OF HISTORY

Some historians are of the opinion that the entire study of Man should be made since the time he is found in the world, i.e., 50000 B.C. onwards. But this is not possible fully as for the period of 50000-5000 B.C. we do not have written records. Study of this period is possible only with the help of archaeological sources which give only the idea of Man's material welfare. Therefore, other historians are of the view that study of Man can be made fully from 5000 B.C. onwards as from that period onwards we have the availability of the written records of Man which give knowledge of his ideas, thoughts, institutions, etc. Alongwith those records are also available archaeological sources to give information about the welfare of Man in the world.

C. EGYPTIAN IS THE OLDEST CIVILIZATION

Egyptian civilization is regarded as the oldest civilization. This is because its available written records are of 5000 B.C. and that of the other civilizations, of later period.

D. IMPORTANCE OF RIVER NILE

Because of the constant flow of the waters of river Nile through the Sahara desert, the Egyptians got facilities to develop the rich civilizations. Therefore, Egypt is called as "a gift of river Nile", and as "the daughter of the Nile."

E. LIFE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

(a) Part played by King Menes in the Development and Government of Egypt— (i) Social life. (ii) Egyptian Government. (iii) Economic Life.

F. RELIGION IN ANCIENT EGYPT

(i) **Religion.** Religion means man's belief in the existence and the power of a God or Gods, involving worship and obedience ; system of faith and worship in respect of God or Gods ; it offers motives, ideas and inspiration to man to live nobly in the world.

(ii) **Egyptian Gods and Beliefs.** Belief in many gods. Natural forces, animals, spirits, etc. Believed that after death, the life of man would get resuscitated. The spirit parted from the body

after death could be reunited by the priest with the body. Therefore invented methods and ways to stop the decay of the dead body. After embalming, buried the bodies and constructed on them tombs, called as the Pyramids. Stored material in them for the use of the dead, placed near the dead body. "The Book of the Dead".

(iii) **Religious Reforms of Amenhotep IV or Ikhnaton (1375-58 B.C.).** Introduced Monotheism of an abstract God, **Aton**. Regarded all men as the children of Aton. Used political power to introduce religion of Aton. Due to this and due to his pacific views towards the aggressors people hated him. After his death, the old religion was reintroduced by Tutenkhamen.

G. INVENTION, DEVELOPMENT AND IMPORTANCE OF THE ART OF WRITING

(i) **Earlier efforts.** Men of Paleolithic and Neolithic Ages drew pictures to communicate their ideas and thoughts to others ; (ii) Egyptians invented step by step by 5000 B.C. the **Hieroglyphic Script of the Hieroglyphics** (pictures) ; (iii) **Hieratic Script** ; (iv) **Demotic (Popular) Script** ; (v) **Material for writing.** Strips of Papyrus reeds ; Ink from soft carbon ; (vi) **Spread of the Art of Writing.** In Crete, Palestine, Phoenicia, etc. ; (vii) **Development of art of Writing by other people.** Phoenicians developed 22 Alphabets and the Greeks developed 4 more Alphabets of the script of the English language ; (viii) **Importance of the Art of Writing.** Knowledge got stored, art of writing helped communication of ideas ; (ix) **The Rosetta Stone or the Key to Egyptology.** When the inscription on it got deciphered, it unlocked vast treasure of knowledge of the Egyptian civilization.

H. SCIENCE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

(i) **The Palermo Stone and the Egyptian Solar Calendar.** On the Palermo stone is inscribed the Egyptian Solar Calendar, its data shows that Egyptians followed it since 4236 B.C. Egyptian year was of 365 days ; (ii) **The Shadow Clock.** With its help, Egyptians decided the day as of 12 hours ; (iii) **Medicine** ; (iv) **Mathematics** ; (v) **Astronomy.**

I. ARCHITECTURE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Egyptians constructed vast buildings. (i) **Pyramid of Gizeh.** (ii) **Temple of Karnak, etc.**

J. LITERATURE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

(a) Literature of a Civilization Reflects its way of Life and its Institutions. (b) Egyptian Literature.

(1) Religious Literature. (i) Book of the Dead. (ii) Hymns of Amenhotep IV; (2) Secular literature. (i) Dramas, (ii) Poetry, Proverbs.

K. ART IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Egyptians were great artists. (1) (a) The Sphinx before the Pyramid of Gizeh, (b) Statues, (c) Sculptures to beautify buildings. (2) Painting. (3) Minor Arts. Skilled furniture, pottery, ornaments, etc. (a) The Tomb of Tutankhamen. All such material of Minor Arts is found in large stock in the Tomb of Tutankhamen (1358-52 B.C.). It is useful for the study of the material welfare art in ancient Egypt.

L. LEGACY IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Other countries, when came in contact with ancient Egypt, learnt from it basic knowledge developed by it in civilization and culture, that made their life and civilization rich.

TEST QUESTIONS

(1) Give a brief account of the legacy of ancient Egypt.

(2) Write on :—

- (i) Ikhnaton ;
- (ii) Social and Economic life in Ancient Egypt ;
- (iii) Science in Ancient Egypt ;
- (iv) Religion of the Ancient Egyptians ;
- (v) Why did the ancient civilizations in West Asia grow in the river valleys ?
- (vi) Contribution of ancient Egypt in the field of art of writing ;
- (vii) Egyptian Art and Architecture ;
- (viii) Tutankhamen's Treasure.

(3) What is the significance of Pyramids to the Egyptians ? What light do these throw on the life and religious beliefs of their builders ? (B. U. April, 1973).

(4) Discuss briefly the part played by King Menes in the development and government of Egypt. (B. U. April, 1973)

(5) How far is it correct to state that the origin and the growth of a civilization were influenced by geographical conditions

in ancient times ? Explain your view point with reference to Egypt. (B. U. April, 1973).

(6) (a) Where and when did civilizations rise in Asia ?

(b) Why did they rise there only and not anywhere else in Asia ? What circumstances did favour the growth of the Egyptian civilization ? (B. U. April, 1973).

(7) Clarify the relation of art to religion in Ancient Civilization of the Nile. (B. U. April, 1973).

(8) Describe in brief the system of medicine in ancient Egypt. (B. U. April, 1973).

(9) How far does the literature of a civilization reflects its way of life and its institutions ? (B. U. April, 1973).

(10) What are Hieroglyphics ? How and when were they found ? (B. U. April, 1973).

4

CIVILIZATION IN MESOPOTEMIA (5000 B.C.—331 B.C.)

OUTLINE

- A. The Builders of Civilization in Mesopotemia
- B. Social Life in Mesopotemia
- C. Economic Life in Mesopotemia
- D. Religion in Mesopotemia
- E. Government and Law in Mesopotemia
- F. Art of Writing in Mesopotemia
- G. Literature in Mesopotemia
- H. Architecture in Mesopotemia
- I. Science in Mesopotemia
- J. Art in Mesopotemia
- K. Legacy of Mesopotemia

In the period parallel to the Egyptian civilization (5000 B.C.)



there developed another great civilization in the area between the two great rivers—Tigris and Euphrates of Asia.

These rivers originate in the Armenian mountains of Asia Minor and running in somewhat parallel lines to a distance of 1500 miles, meet the Persian Gulf in the South. The land which got created between their courses due to the deposits of yearly fresh soil, is known by the Greek name "**Mesopotamia**", i.e., a land between the Two rivers. This land was also called as the "**Fertile Crescent**" because its semi-circle shape was like the visible part of the moon in first or last quarter.

A. THE BUILDERS OF CIVILIZATION IN MESOPOTEMIA

(1) **Circumstances Favouring the Growth of the Mesopotemian Civilization.** The two big rivers, Tigris and Euphrates made the land of Mesopotamia immensely fertile due to their continuous flow of water throughout the year. Their floods brought every time, the rich deposits of soft soil and minerals to the territory of Mesopotamia. That helped the land of Mesopotamia remain beneficial for agriculture. In the absence of the rivers Tigris and Euphrates the land of Mesopotamia would have become barren like the land of the Arabian desert which exists to its western side. The fertility of the soil in Mesopotamia greatly contributed to the growth of the civilization in it.

Together with this, during the period of 5000 -2750 B.C., the founders of that civilization in Sumeria, the Sumerians, enjoyed conditions of undisturbed rule because of the presence of the Armenian mountains to the northern side, the Persian Gulf in the Southern side, the Elam mountains and hilly tracts in the eastern side and the Arabian desert in the western side. As a result of these natural surroundings by which Mesopotamia is surrounded, it was not possible for the people of outside areas to cross those and attack Mesopotamia easily in the ancient period when the science and the means of communications had not developed adequately. That gave a facility to the Sumerian people to found on firmer footing the Mesopotemian civilization and develop it according to their own ideas for a prolonged period of time.

(i) **Sumerians.** In the lower southern part of this land had settled the Sumerian people in 5000 B.C. They were probably people of Central Asia and had migrated to Mesopotamia to find out fertile agricultural lands. Since they were people of "**black-heads**", i.e., having black hair, they were called as the Sumerian people.

The lower Southern part of Mesopotamia acquired the name **Sumeria** because of the habitation of the Sumerians in it during 5000 B.C.-2750 B.C. During this period, the Sumerians laid down the foundations of civilization and culture of Mesopotamia.

(ii) **Akkadians.** The political control of the Sumerians came to an end in 2750 B.C. as the Akkadians conquered them. The Akkadians were of the desert tracts in Mesopotamia which were to the North of Sumeria. They were a nomadic people and since they needed fertile agricultural land to maintain their population, they had conquered Sumeria. The Akkadians were the political masters of Sumeria and Akkad during 2750 B.C.-2200 B.C. Since they were not a superior people than the Sumerians in the matters of civilization and culture, they managed the course of life of the people under them on the basis of the matters developed earlier by the Sumerians.

(iii) **Amorites.** In 2200 B.C. the Amorite people of Syria conquered the Sumerian-Akkadian people. Their rulers, bringing under them the entire territory of Mesopotamia, ruled over it up to 1750 B.C. Their most illustrious ruler was Hammurabi (2123-2080 B.C.) [See; E. Government and Law in Mesopotamia].

During the period of their hold, the Amorite rulers developed a system of law, encouraged architecture and promoted trade and well-being of the Mesopotemians. The Amorite hold in Mesopotamia came to an end when in 1750 B.C. they were defeated by the Kassite people of North-Eastern Mesopotamia.

(iv) **Kassites.** The Kassites, who were not a developed people in the matters of civilization and culture, did not contribute anything new to the life of Mesopotamia. The Kassite power was replaced by the Assyrians in 1100 B.C.

(v) **Assyrians.** The Assyrians were of the mountainous territory of the North of Mesopotamia. They were great warriors. Their rulers conquered Syria Palestine (the States of Israel and Judah of the Jew people), Phoenicia and Asia Minor. Due to these conquests the Mesopotemian culture and civilization spread in those territories of their empire.

(a) **Reasons for the Rise of the Assyrian Empire.** The Assyrian rulers proved able to build up a vast Mesopotemian empire because they had a superior military equipment in comparison with the one possessed by the other contemporary Asian

civilizations in Asia Minor territory. The Assyrians used iron weapons. Due to it they could easily defeat the people of Syria, Palestine and Phoenicia, who because of their ignorance of iron used the weapons of copper, which happens to be a soft metal. In that, the Assyrian military troops were given systematic and regular training of fighting warfare in closed ranks which was till that time not given to the troops of the other Asian civilization. The Assyrian rulers also used the battering-rams to attack the enemy troops. Due to the attacks of those rams when the enemy troops got disorganised, it became easy for the Assyrian troops to attack and defeat the enemy.

(b) **Salient Features of the Assyrian Government.** Due to their superior military power and equipment, the Assyrians proved to be the first People in Mesopotamia to build the Mesopotemian empire in the territories outside Mesopotamia by conquering the outside countries. That led them to make government machinery capable to attend larger tasks.

The Assyrian government in Mesopotamia which ruled Assyria, Sumeria, Babylonia, Egypt and the Asia Minor countries like Armenia, Palestine, Syria, Phoenicia and the territories in Persia like Elam and Media was a very big administrative organization in the Near Eastern world.

In some of the matters the Assyrian's was a liberal empire. Its larger cities had considerable local autonomy. It also allowed each conquered nation to follow its own religion, law and ruler if it paid promptly its tribute to the Assyrian emperor. Since the organization of the Assyrian government was so loose, the Assyrian emperors expected the conquered countries to revolt at times against their political domination. To avoid largely such a possibility, the Assyrian emperors followed a policy of deporting conquered populations to other parts of the Assyrian empire where mingling with the natives, they might lose their identity and political, religious and racial unity and have less opportunity to revolt against the Assyrian government. Even after this if the revolts of the conquered people took place, the Assyrian emperors suppressed those with the help of their army.

To maintain law, order and peace, and to suppress the revolts against the Assyrian government, the Assyrian emperors maintained a vast and well-trained army. The army was the chief feature of the Assyrian government.

Next to the army, the chief reliance of the Assyrian emperor was upon the religion. The emperor paid lavishly for the support of the priests. It was believed by the Assyrians that the formal head of their state was their god, Ashur. Therefore, the Pronouncements and the laws of the Assyrian government were in the name of god Ashur. It collected taxes for the treasury of god Ashur.

The Assyrian emperor described himself as a god; an incarnation of the Sun god (Shamash).

The Assyrian emperor was the head of the government, military, and judiciary in Mesopotemia. He gave vast tracts of land to the nobles of his empire when they carried out the civil and military duties of the Assyrian government.

For the purpose of efficient administration, the Assyrian emperor divided his empire into different provinces. On those provinces, he appointed governors. The governors collected taxes from the subjects and organized public works like irrigation and construction of roads. They also raised troops and led them in the royal campaigns.

The Assyrian emperor also maintained royal spies (Intelligence Officers) to keep watch on the work of the governors and other officials. Those spies regularly reported to the Assyrian Kings about the state of the conditions prevailing in the Assyrian empire.

The merit of the Assyrian form of imperial government was this, that it was taken over by Persia when it conquered Mesopotemia in 539 B.C. From Persia it was that Alexander the great of Macedonia adopted it. From him, it was adopted by the statesmen of the ancient Roman empire.

The Assyrian kings were patrons of arts, sciences and learning.

The Assyrian rule came to an end in 612 B.C. due to the conquest of Mesopotemia by the Chaldean people.

(vi) **Chaldeans.** The Chaldeans, who were the residents of the South-eastern territory near Mesopotemia, furthered the interests of astronomy and architecture.

The Chaldeans were defeated by the Persians in 539 B.C. and after that Mesopotemia became a part of the Persian empire.

The people of ancient Mesopotemia developed new ideas in

the matters of religion, law, art of writing, literature, science, art and architecture.

B. SOCIAL LIFE IN MESOPOTEMIA

(i) **Society of classes.** The society of ancient Mesopotamia was made up of people who belonged to different classes.

The people of the rich or upper class were the nobles, rich merchants, high government officials and industrialists.

The members of the middle class were small businessmen, priests, physicians and scholars.

The members of the poor class were the workers and labourers.

There also existed a class of people who were the slaves in Mesopotamia. They were people who were captured in warfare against other countries by the rulers of Mesopotamia. Women slaves were purchased in the slave-markets.

(ii) **Condition of Slaves.** Before the introduction of the Code of Law of the Amorite ruler **Hammurabi** (2123-2080 B.C.) in Mesopotamia, the life of the slaves in the Mesopotemian Society was miserable. They were fully at the mercy of their masters who generally ill-treated them.

But from the time of King **Hammurabi** onwards, the condition of the slaves became somewhat better in Mesopotamia.

The slaves were employed in agriculture, industry and the household work by their masters.

The masters were required to take due care of the slaves when they were sick, old and had become physically disabled. The owners of the slaves were required to take necessary steps to make arrangement for the shelter, food and clothing of the slaves.

The slaves were permitted to marry the free women of the Mesopotemian society. The children of such a marriage were regarded as free persons and they were allowed to inherit a half of the property after the death of their father.

Like the free peasant, the slave in the Mesopotemian society was liable for compulsory military service and forced labour in public works like the construction of roads and digging canals.

The slaves in Mesopotamia could purchase freedom from the masters by making necessary monetary payments. The masters

also set the slaves free because of their goodwill or sympathy towards them.

C. ECONOMIC LIFE IN MESOPOTEMIA

(i) **Agriculture.** The main occupation of the Mesopotemian people was agriculture. They grew a variety of crops like wheat, barley, etc. To supply the water of rivers Tigris and Euphrates to their fields, they dug canals and constructed irrigation works.

(ii) **Industry.** The Mesopotemians were also engaged in the industries. They managed the industries of woollen textiles, pottery, metal wares, leather-wear, bricks, etc.

(iii) **Trade.** The Mesopotemian traders conducted a busy and far-flung trade with distant countries in the world. The seals of the early Sumerians who had trade with India have been traced in the parts of the Northern India. The Mesopotemians had trade in Palestine, Phoenicia, Asia Minor, Crete, Egypt, etc. Because of the trade of Mesopotamia with those countries, their people obtained the knowledge of the Mesopotemian mythology, architecture, weights and measures, law, etc.

D. RELIGION IN MESOPOTEMIA

(i) **Gods.** The people of Mesopotamia were largely agriculturists. Therefore, they worshipped the forces of Nature after giving them the names of different gods and goddesses. Enki was their god of the Earth and Heaven. Sun was the Moon God. Abu or Tammuz, the god of vegetation, Shamash, the Sun God, Ishtar, the goddess of Fertility. Enlil, the god of Air. Assur, the god of military prowess. They also worshipped planets like Saturn, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, etc.

The Mesopotemians believed that the air was full of the good and bad spirits. The good spirits were the angels who were good and favourable and the evil were the demons or devils who harmed the well-being of man in the world.

(ii) **Sacrifices.** To secure the favours of the God and the good spirits, the Mesopotemians offered to them the sacrifices of butter, oil, vegetables, fruits.

(iii) **Temples.** The Mesopotemian people had temples of these gods in their different cities. Those temples were called as the ziggurats.

The temple or the ziggurat was under the charge of the priest

who was called as a **Patesi** in the language of the Mesopotemian people. In the earlier part of the Mesopotemian civilization, the people had settled in cities which were under the Patesis. In most matters these Patesis were the government and as yet it is not clear from the evidence as to what extent the Patesi was a priest and to what extent a king. The offerings of the Mesopotemians to the gods made the Patesis a wealthy section of the society of Mesopotemia.

(iv) **Mythology.** The Patesis guided the people in the matters of virtue and moral behaviour. For this, they gave the people religious hymns and told them simple stories.

In those stories, they tried to answer natural questions in the human mind regarding life and death. Such stories built up the Mesopotemian Mythology, i.e., a set of some imaginative stories (myths) and stories based on tradition (legends), popularly accepted as true but which cannot be proved. The earlier people of the Mesopotemian civilization, the Sumerians (5000-2750 B.C.) gave the world its old and rich Mythology.

(a) **Story of Gilgamesh.** Through these mythological stories the Sumerians Patesis gave knowledge to the people that man is mortal and he will not become immortal in the world even if he does any efforts to achieve immortality. They communicated this truth to the people through the epic story of the legendary hero of the Sumerians, Gilgamesh. They pointed out in it that even after performing mighty deeds and strange adventures, also Gilgamesh failed to gain immortal life.

(b) **Story of the Flood.** In one of their legends, the Sumerians narrated how the gods had created man happy in the world. They showed in it how the man of free will had sinned and how he had been punished with a flood by the God. From that destructive flood in the world all men perished except the virtuous person, weaver Tagtug. That Tagtug also forfeited longevity and health by eating the fruit of a forbidden tree.

(c) **Influence on other countries.** These mythological stories of the Sumerians which imported the knowledge of the truth of human life and the punishment meted out by God to the sinful persons in the world got known to the people of other countries with whom the Sumerians had trade contacts.

On the lines of the Sumerian stories, the Hebrews of Palestine developed stories which are found in the Old Testament, the first

book of the Bible. Some historians feel that probably the story of the Flood and Manu found in the sacred literature of Hinduism is a product of the influence of the Sumerian mythology on the people of India.

The people of Mesopotamia believed in life after death. They, therefore, buried the dead with their belongings in the graves. But the Mesopotemians, in their religious thought, had not conceived the ideas about heaven or hell, eternal reward and punishment. They offered prayer and sacrifice for the practical advantages for life in the world and not for "eternal life".

E. GOVERNMENT AND LAW IN MESOPOTEMIA

(1) **Government Under the Sumerians.** The Sumerians who were the founders of the Mesopotemian civilization were industrious men. Soon after their settlement in Sumeria (the lower territory of Mesopotamia) in 5000 B.C. they developed their agriculture, industries and trade. That caused the establishment of their cities at the earliest period of their civilization.

Each of those cities developed its own city-state in Sumeria. The city-state was governed by a Priest-king or **Patesi**.

The Patesi was the highest head of the civil, military, religious and judicial administration of his city-state. Thus the government administration of the city-state in Sumeria was theocratic (bound with religion), centralized and autocratic in nature.

The Patesi managed the government administration from the Ziggurate on the top of whose structure existed the temples of the god worshipped by the subjects of his city-state. [See, **H. Architecture in Mesopotamia**].

The Patesis of the different city-states constantly fought wars with each other to become politically supreme in Mesopotamia. This caused conditions of political unrest and instability in Sumeria. These conditions came to an end when king Hammurabi (2123-2080 B.C.) established his supreme rule over all Mesopotamia. (See, **Part Played By Hammurabi (2123-2080 B.C.) In Babylonia In the Development And Government of Mesopotamia**.)

(i) **Sumerian laws.** To manage the work of their government properly and to regulate the life of their people, the Sumerians (5000-2750 B.C.), evolved in Mesopotamia a system of laws. That system became the basis of the legal matters of the subsequent people who ruled Mesopotamia after the Sumerians.

The Sumerians prepared laws to regulate and deal with the complications pertaining to marriage. They also developed laws to regulate commercial transactions, loans, contracts, buying, selling, property rights, adoptions and gifts given to others.

In the temples were the courts of justice. The judges of those courts were the priests. Over a superior court presided the professional judges. The Sumerians went to these courts⁷ as a last resort. As far as possible, they submitted their cases first⁴ to the public arbitrators who did their best to bring about an amicable settlement between the parties at dispute, without recourse to law.

(2) Part Played By Hammurabi (2123-2030 B.C.) In Babylonia In the Development And Government of Mesopotamia. King Hammurabi (2123-2080 B.C.) was the sixth ruler of the Amorite dynasty, which had established its power in Mesopotamia during 2200-1750 B.C. (See, A. *The Builders of Civilization in Mesopotamia*.) He played an important part in Babylonia (a Southern part of Mesopotamia) in the development and government of Mesopotamia.

King Hammurabi was a great commander and a statesman of foresight. To put an end to the conditions of political instability and confusion caused by the constant wars of the rulers of the city-states in Sumeria and other parts of Mesopotamia, he decided to establish his paramount power and bring the entire land of Mesopotamia under his centralized form of strong government. Actuated by the motive to establish political unity in the life of all the people of Mesopotamia and initiate in Mesopotamia an orderly course of life to further the interests of human civilization and culture, King Hammurabi defeated all the rulers of the city-states in Mesopotamia.

After establishing his supreme authority in the entire land of Mesopotamia, Hammurabi introduced in it his strong centralized government.

The king was the supreme head of that government. It worked on the basis of the ideas and inspiration provided for its functioning by the king. Since the king was the moving force behind its work, Hammurabi took keen personal interest in the work of his government. He was a man of idealism and that is why he stated for the first time in the history of mankind as to how a king should treat his subjects. He stated that the king should regard

the subjects as his children. By this he not only set a noble goal for the office of the king in Mesopotamia for his successors but set it also for the work of the kings of the other Asian countries in the ancient period.

By establishing in Mesopotamia conditions of political unity, peace and orderly life, Hammurabi laid down the foundations of the development of civilization in Mesopotamia. As a result of the efficient work of his government, Mesopotamia became an orderly country for the first time in its history during the reign of Hammurabi.

Hammurabi made Babylon, an important city in Babylonia, as his capital city. He beautified the city of Babylon by constructing in it palaces, public buildings and gardens. In it he encouraged trade and industry. This brought riches to the inhabitants of Babylonia and Babylon. As a result of this and the artistic and scientific activity of their people Babylonia and Babylon played an important role in the civilization of Mesopotamia upto 332 B.C.

Under the king existed the ministers of different departments like finance, trade, agriculture, industry, etc. Under those ministers existed large number of government officials.

The government of Hammurabi used to collect taxes in kind from the subjects. For the proper and judicial collection of the taxes, his government used to carry out detailed surveys of the agricultural lands. As a result of these matters, the age of king Hammurabi became the Golden Age of the Mesopotemian civilization.

The centralized form of the government and the machinery of its administration which king Hammurabi had instituted in Mesopotamia was continued by the rulers of different dynasties who ruled in Mesopotamia upto 539 B.C.

(i) **The Law Code of Hammurabi.** On the basis of the laws and legal practices of the Sumerians, the greatest ruler of the Amorite people in Mesopotamia, **Hammurabi** (2123-2080 B.C.) evolved his code of laws to give stability, prosperity and orderly life to the Mesopotemians.

(a) **First Code of Law in the world.** King Hammurabi's is the first Code of laws (system of rules) in human history. It is engraved on a stone slab.

In that code, Hammurabi gave the Mesopotemians laws relating to personal property, trade, business, family, labour, banking, contracts, debts, interest, wages, public morality, prices and criminal conduct.

(b) **Principles for punishment.** The Code of Hammurabi prescribed severe punishments for the offenders of the laws. According to it, the culprits were given punishment on the basis of the principle of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth". By that it was meant that if a person did a particular physical injury to the other, the government was to inflict a similar injury upon the offender.

(c) **Effects.** The prescription of the punishments on the basis of this principle brought under control the high-handed and insolent treatment given by the rich and the stronger persons in the Mesopotemian society to the poor, widows, orphans and the slaves. In the ancient age, when might was regarded as right, the lot of the weaker sections of the society was miserable. The methods of punishing crime according to the principle of the Code of Hammurabi largely made the lot of the weaker sections of society safe. Due to it, the life of common man became happy and peaceful in the reign of Hammurabi.

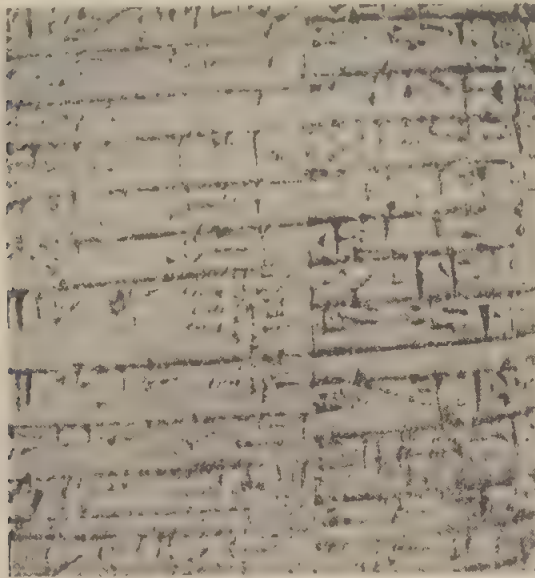
(d) **Influence of the Code on other Countries.** The Code of Law of Hammurabi, in future, influenced the Code which Prophet Moses gave to the Hebrew people of Palestine. The contents of the code of Hammurabi formed the basis of the laws by which the life of the people of Arabia, Phoenicia, etc., was governed in Western Asia. That code also affected the Roman jurisprudence.

F. ART OF WRITING IN MESOPOTEMIA

Like the ancient Egyptian people the Sumerians of Mesopotemia also invented and practised the art of writing in the earlier period of their civilization. The earliest evidence of their art of writing is available from a stone inscription which is of the period of 3600 B.C.

(a) **Use of Clay Tablets.** For practising their art of writing the Sumerian people used tablets of soft clay. They wrote on these tablets with the help of a reed pen. After when their writing on the wet soft clay tablet was complex, they exposed that table to sunlight. In the sunlight, it became dry and became a permanent record in comparison with the matter written on the soft material like paper which perished earlier.

(b) **Script.** The Sumerians made the beginning of their art of writing by drawing pictures. Gradually, they invented 350 signs from those pictures. With those signs, they used to write full words. To write one word, the Sumerians used one sign. Those signs did not stand for any alphabets. In this, the Sumerian script was different from ours in which we write the alphabets of a word. Whereas to write the word 'OX'



*Each stroke of Cuneiform writing was wedge shaped.
Combinations of strokes stood for different sounds.*

we have used two alphabets, the Sumerians, to write it, used to draw only one sign. These were invented by the Sumerians independently and without borrowing anything about them from the other people.

When the Sumerians wrote those signs on the wet soft clay tablets with the help of a reed pen or stylus (a sharp pointed instrument), those signs became of a peculiar shape. Those signs had a shape of the alphabet 'V' of the script in which we write the English language. Due to this peculiar shape of the signs with which the Sumerians practised the art of writing, their script for writing is called as the **Cuneiform Script** in the Latin language.

(c) **Influence on Others.** With the help of their **Cuneiform Script** the Sumerians and other ancient Mesopotemian people wrote vast literature of different subjects and sciences. The sumerian script was adopted by the Jews and the Persians up to 1st century B.C. After 1st century B.C., they gave up writing in the Sumerian script and adopted the alphabetic script of the Phoenicians.

G. LITERATURE IN MESOPOTEMIA

(i) **Literature.** The clay tablets on which the Sumerians have written are available from 3200 B.C. onwards. The earlier clay tablets have largely written on them the matters pertaining to the contracts, bills, payments, etc. But gradually, the Sumerians, started writing their literature on the clay tablets with the help of the **cuneiform script**.

The early literature of the Sumerians in the cuneiform script was of the prayers addressed to the Gods, poems which expressed mourning and the Mythological stories.

When the rule of the Amorite people (2200-1750 B.C.) brought conditions of political stability and prosperity to Mesopotemia, the literature in that country became rich.

The most fascinating of the Mesopotemian literature written in the cuneiform script was the Epic of Gilgamesh. It was an elaboration of the Mythological account of Gilgamesh stated earlier by the Sumerians.

On the clay tablets, with the help of cuneiform script, the Mesopotemian writers wrote the books of stories, love-poems and songs. They give a vivid picture of rich imagination and morality of the Mesopotemian people.

(ii) **Royal Library of Assurbanipal.** The famous king of Mesopotemia, Assurbanipal (760-626 B.C.) of the Assyrian Dynasty was a great patron of learning and literature.

As he himself was a great scholar, he developed interest in the study of the matters pertaining to the subjects like religion, law, mathematics, astronomy, language, etc. For this study, he made a collection of the important works of different subjects which were written by eminent scholars of Mesopotemia.

These books were written in the cuneiform script on clay tablets. Assurbanipal got those thousands of books arranged

properly and preserved them in his royal library at Nineveh, his capital city.

Since the clay tablets are a less perishable material, they have remained intact even up to the present time. Due to the availability of the books written on clay tablets of the library of Assurbanipal, and authentic data of the development of Mesopotemian sciences, religion, law, etc., has become available to the historians to reconstruct the picture of the ancient Mesopotemian civilization.

H. ARCHITECTURE IN MESOPOTEMIA

The ancient people of Mesopotemia had developed a peculiar type of architecture.

(i) **Cottages.** The Mesopotemian farmers constructed their cottages with the help of reeds. They planted the reeds in a square or a rectangle or a circle. After that, the farmers bound the tops of those reeds together. That gave the shape of a dome to the cottages.

(ii) **Houses.** The rich people of Mesopotemia used bricks for the construction of their houses. The inner walls of the houses were plastered and painted. The houses mostly did not have windows.

(iii) **Ziggurats.** The Sumerians were mountain dwellers before their settlement in Mesopotemia. After laying down the foundations of their civilization in Mesopotemia, they started the construction of the artificial mountain like temple tower which was called as the Ziggurat, literally "high place". The Ziggurat was a tower of diminishing cubical stories surrounded by external stairs. The Sumerians were followed in the construction of such Ziggurats by the Amorite and the Assyrian people of Mesopotemia. On the top of the structure of the Ziggurat existed the temple of the god which was worshipped by the people.

The Mesopotemian architects prepared elaborate plans for the construction of the Ziggurats. Some such plans drawn to scale on clay tablets have been discovered. The architects also used to mark out on the bitumen floor by the thin red lines the ground plan of a temple.

The Mesopotemians constructed the ziggurats for their gods in every city. Out of those ziggurats the one which has been found in the ancient city of Erech measures overall 245 by 100 feet.

Since the Ziggurats were the centres of the government and religious activity in Mesopotamia, those had tremendous significance in the life of the ancient Mesopotemians.



The most conspicuous buildings of Babylon were the tower temples with their "blocks" of different colours.

(a) **Tower of Babel.** The people of Shinar (Sumeria) had constructed, according to a myth of the Hebrew people of Palestine, a lofty Ziggurat at the city of Babylon. That Ziggurat was of 650 feet and some historians feel that it was the famous "Tower of Babel" which was regarded as one of the wonders of the ancient world. That Ziggurat (Tower of Babel) had seven stories and it was constructed with superb architectural skill.

(b) **Architecture under Nebuchadnezzar.** The Mesopotemian architecture reached its height of grandeur during the reign of the Chaldean ruler Nebuchadnezzar (604-561 B.C.).

(1) **Wall Around Babylon.** He constructed around Babylon, his capital city, a wall which was fifty-six miles in length. It was so broad "that a four-horse chariot could be driven along the top."

(2) **Palaces.** Nebuchadnezzar also built imposing palaces at Babylon. The walls of his dwelling palace were constructed by using yellow bricks. Its floors were made of a variety of sandstones—white and having spots of different colours or shades.

(3) **Hanging Gardens.** Near those palaces, supported on a succession of superimposed circular pillars, Nebuchadnezzar constructed terraces, the topmost of which was 75 feet above the ground. He covered the topmost of these terraces with soil to the depth of many feet. In that soil, he planted largest and most deep rooted trees and flower plants. To supply water to those plants and trees, he made arrangements to carry water from river Euphrates to the highest terrace of the garden with the help of hydraulic engines. Those engines were fitted in the hollows of the pillars which supported the terraces. These gardens of Nebuchadnezzar were called as the "Hanging Gardens" by the Greeks who regarded them as one of the wonders of the ancient world.

I. SCIENCE IN MESOPOTEMIA

To live a progressive and well organized life the people of the Mesopotamia took the care to develop different sciences.

(i) **Lunar calendar.** For guiding the course of human activity in work and in religious matters, the Sumerian people evolved a system of their Lunar calendar. According to their calculations which were based on the study of the planet Moon, they settled the year as of 12 months. Their every month was of 30 days. Thus their year was of 360 days. Gradually, the Sumerians, by their careful study of the phases of the Moon, realized that the 360 days which they had fixed for a year were less than the number of days they should have scientifically for it. Therefore, to increase the total number of days and to tally those with their calculations of the phases of the Moon, they started adding the days of one month (30 days) in their calendar system, whenever necessary, to bring the year in harmony with the seasons.

(a) **Influence on others.** The Sumerian lunar calendar system was inaccurate and inconvenient. But it was adopted by the Jews of Palestine and the Persian people of Persia to organize their course of life. That calendar system is still followed by the Muslims and the Jews in the world.

The lunar calendar system of the Sumerians was followed by all the Mesopotemians. Later, in about 250 B.C. it was improved by a Chaldean astronomer, Nabonassar.

(ii) **Water-Clock.** To measure the time of the day and the night, the Sumerians devised the instruments of the Sun-dial and a water-clock. Their water-clock worked on the principle of an hour-glass (a vessel consisting of two glass bulbs connected by a narrow neck, through which all the sand or other substance in the upper bulb runs into the lower bulb in an hour). With the help of these instruments, the Sumerians decided the day and the night as of 12 hours each. From their calculations, in the world developed the practice of regarding the day (time of the day and night together) as of 24 hours.

The Sumerians divided the time of an hour into 60 minutes. The time of a minute was subdivided by them into 60 seconds. The Sumerian technique of measuring the time was adopted by all the people of Mesopotamia. In later period it was accepted by all the countries in the world.

(iii) **Mathematics.** In the civilized life of a community, developed a complicated economy. People busy in trade, industry and agriculture are required to settle the transactions of their goods with others and maintain accounts.

Similarly, to live a settled and comfortable life, persons are required to construct houses and buildings. For their common worship of the Gods, they are required to construct temples.

Such necessities led the Sumerians of Mesopotamia to invent arithmetic and geometry.

(a) **Arithmetic.** To count the pieces of materials, they invented the use of numbers from 1 to 9. They used signs for the units of ten, sixty, etc. They had not discovered the use of the sign, zero.

Before 1500 B.C. the Sumerians had prepared the multiplication tables to memorize the additions of the figures as "16 by 4" is equal to 64.

On the basis of this arithmetical knowledge, the people of Mesopotamia maintained their accounts.

(b) **Geometry.** In the early period of their civilization, the Sumerians knew the method of calculating the areas of the fields and the buildings. The areas were calculated by them as length by breadth of the building or the field. This is proved by some of their clay tables on which these calculations are made.

The Sumerians had also worked out by actual measurement

the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter. With the help of that knowledge, the Sumerians could estimate the contents of a cylindrical granary or decide the number of bricks a mason would need to construct a round pillar.

The Sumerian arithmetic and geometry was followed by the other people who ruled Mesopotamia from time to time.

(iv) **Weights and Measures.** To weigh the material and grains for conducting economic transactions and to measure cloth, wood, bricks, stones, etc., the Sumerians developed a system of weights and measures.

(a) **Weights.** Their weight which was called as the "Mina" was equal to the weight of the present day Pound (40 tolas). It was the leading unit of weight in the Sumerian economy.

Sixty Minas formed the highest weight of the Sumerians and it was called as the Talent.

For the facility of small transactions, the Sumerians divided the Mina into 60 units of small size. These smaller units were called as the **Shekels**.

These weights were used by all the people of the Mesopotamian civilization. When the knowledge of those weights spread due to the trade of the Sumerian people in Arabia, Palestine, Phoenicia, Asia Minor and parts of Europe, the people of those areas adopted for their transactions, the Sumerian system of weights.

(b) **Measures.** To measure the space to be constructed, to cut the stones, timber to be used for the construction of buildings, to manufacture bricks of uniform sizes, the Sumerians prepared measuring rods of wood. On those rods, they marked the length of a cubit (an ancient measure of length, originally represented by the length of the forearm ; about 18 to 20 inches). The cubit was subdivided into five equal parts and each of those parts was further subdivided into its one-sixth parts.

(v) **Astronomy.** It is a science that treats of the heavenly bodies, including their sizes, motions, distances, position, etc.

(a) **Sumerian Astronomy.** The Sumerian people laid down the foundations of the science of astronomy in Mesopotamia. From the height of the Ziggurats, the Sumerian priests observed the position of different planets in the sky. They used to maintain

the records of those observations. One of those records pertains to their observation of an eclipse of the moon in 2300 B.C.

(b) **Chaldean Astronomy.** The Chaldean astronomers continued the efforts of the Sumerians to observe the planets and keep the records of their observations on clay tablets. Those records are of a continuous period of 360 years and they are the first great body of astronomical knowledge in the world.

Such old astronomical records were effectively used by the famous Chaldean astronomer, Naburimannu.

Naburimannu used those records to compile tables of the motions of the Sun and Moon. In those tables he recorded his calculations of the time required by those two planets to make their revolutions, daily, monthly, yearly. He also recorded in those records the exact dates of the eclipse of the Sun and the Moon.

On the basis of the study of those tables, Naburimannu stated that the year was of 365 days, 6 hours, 15 minutes and 41 seconds. This was very much near to the year of modern calendar system which is of 365 days and 6 hours.

Another great Chaldean astronomer after Naburimannu was Kidinnu. He greatly increased the accuracy of the astronomical tables prepared by Naburimannu. By his calculations of the sun-moon motions he brought the Chaldean calendar system nearer to the point of accuracy of the modern calendar.

The astronomical works of Naburimannu and Kidinnu were adopted as the basis of the Greeks to introduce a scientific calendar at Athens.

(vi) **Astrology.** It is a science which believes in the influence of stars and planets over human destiny.

(a) **Sumerian Astrology.** The Sumerian priests observed the movements and positions of the stars and planets in the sky from the top of the Ziggurats. Gradually, they developed the idea that the position and movements of the stars and the planets have influence over the human destiny. Thus, their study of Astronomy led them to found the principles of Astrology.

On the basis of their considerations of the principles of Astrology, the Sumerian priests told the people about the auspicious time to begin agricultural operations, to undertake construction of a house or start on a journey.

The Sumerian priests believed that the movement of the heavenly bodies represented the will of the gods and its study is useful to know about their wishes. Therefore, they started the practice of making offerings to the gods to have sufficient rainfall for the crops and for the prevention of floods.

The Sumerians knew about the five planets, namely, Mars, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Saturn. They regarded that these five planets had powers to control the fortunes of man. The Sumerians, therefore, had started their worship.

(b) **Chaldean Astrology.** The Chaldean priests included the worship of the planet Sun and Moon along with the worship of the other five planets worshipped by the Sumerians as stated above.

The Chaldean astrologers divided a month into 4 weeks of seven days each. By starting the worship of the 7 known planets on the 7 days of the week, they gave the name of a planet to the day on which that planet was to be worshipped. They gave a name Sunday to a day on which the planet Sun was to be worshipped, Monday on which the Moon was to be worshipped, etc.

The knowledge of the Mesopotemian astrology and the names of the days of the week reached in Asia Minor, Greece, Palestine, Phoenicia, Italy and Aegean Islands through the Sumerian trade. The people of those areas adopted the Mesopotemian Astrology, and the names of the days in the way of their life.

(vii) **Medicine.** The Mesopotemians believed that the evil spirits cause diseases in human body. The illness itself was personified by them as an evil spirit.

The Mesopotemian physicians sought to expel the illness (evil spirit) from the body of the patient by the use of emetics and purges. They also used magical formulas to draw off the demon of the disease into the small statues made of corn flour and then burn those statues. They also drew off the demon of the disease into an animal or confine it into an amulet.

The dependence of Mesopotemians upon the religious beliefs in the evil spirits as a cause of diseases did not lead them to develop their science of medicine. Though during the reign of the Amorite King Hammurabi (2123-2080 B.C.) there had developed a class of professional physicians who treated diseases and performed operations, the science of medicine did not develop on

scientific lines as the people of Mesopotamia kept on demanding for supernatural diagnosis and magical cures for illness.

J. ART IN MESOPOTEMIA

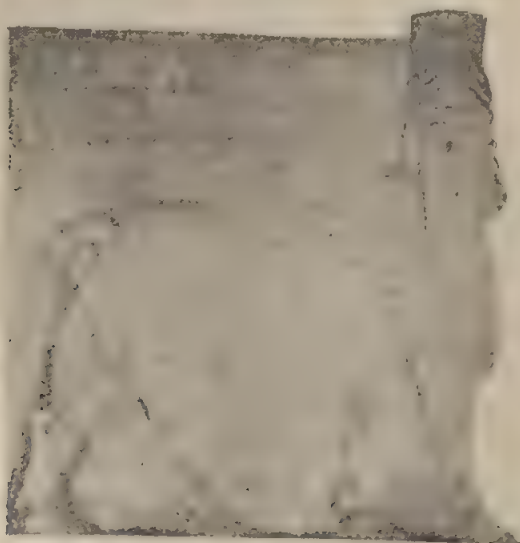
(a) **Relation of Art to Religion in Ancient Civilization of the Euphrates-Tigris.** The ancient artists of Mesopotamia used their art to serve their religious matters. In sculpture (especially in the bas-relief sculpture) the sculptors depicted realistically religious scenes in the temples.

The Mesopotemian temples in the ziggurats were decorated with the statues of gods of the Mesopotemian religion.

The people of Mesopotamia tried to live comfortably and artistically according to their means. The Mesopotemian artists, painters and sculptors developed skill to make life rich and artistic.

(i) **Sculpture.** The Sumerians developed the sculpture called as the Bas-relief. It is a type of sculpture in which the figures are only slightly raised from the background. On the plastered walls of the temples the Sumerian artists drew war scenes, figures of the animals and birds in bas-reliefs to beautify the surrounding.

The rulers of the Assyrian Dynasty (1100-612 B.C.) gave lavish patronage to the artists in Mesopotamia. During the Assyrian



Sulfa! Assyrians carved this human-headed winged bull from one block of stone which weighed 40 tons.

period, the Mesopotemian artists produced masterpieces of the art of bas-relief. The artists produced the figures of great skill and beauty of the gods, demons, animals and birds on the walls of the Mesopotemian temples and palaces. The Mesopotemian sculptors carved out appropriately the features, muscles and expressions of joy, anger, anxiety and pain in the sculptures of men and animals to produce desired artistic effect.

(ii) **Other Arts.** The Mesopotemian artists also manufactured and prepared articles of great skill like the furniture, statues, pottery, ornaments, etc.

Due to all these matters life in Mesopotemia became comfortable in the ancient age.

K. LEGACY OF MESOPOTEMIA

The world owes a great debt to the ancient civilization of Mesopotemia in the matters of mythology, art of writing, astronomy, astrology, systems of weights and the bas-relief sculptures.

The people of Arabia, Palestine, Phoenicia, Asia Minor, Aegean Islands, Crete, Persia, etc., learnt the matters of great skill from Mesopotemian scientists and artists. After assimilating the matters of the Mesopotemian origin in the way of their own life, the people of these countries became the people of progressive civilizations.

MAIN POINTS

A. THE BUILDERS OF CIVILIZATION IN MESOPOTEMIA

(1) **Circumstances Favouring the Growth of the Mesopotemian Civilization.** (i) Sumerians; (ii) Akkadians; (iii) Amorites; (iv) Kasites; (v) Assyrians (a) **Reasons for the Rise of the Assyrian Empire;** (b) **Salient Features of the Assyrian Government and** (vi) **Chaldeans.**

B. SOCIAL LIFE IN MESOPOTEMIA

(i) **Society of Classes;** (ii) **Condition of Slaves**

C. ECONOMIC LIFE IN MESOPOTEMIA

(i) **Agriculture;** (ii) **Industry;** and (iii) **Trade.**

D. RELIGION IN MESOPOTEMIA

(i) **Gods;** (ii) **Sacrifices;** (iii) **Temples;** and (iv) **Mythology.**
Stories to guide people in the matters of Morality and Virtue—
(a) **Story of Gilgamesh,** (b) **Story of the Flood,** (c) **Influence**

on other countries. In the Hebrew and Indian Mythology the influence is traced.

E. GOVERNMENT AND LAW IN MESOPOTEMIA

(1) **Government under the Sumerians.** (i) **Sumerian Laws.** (2) **Part Played By Hammurabi (2123-2080 B.C.)** In **Babylonia In the Development And Government of Mesopotamia.** (i) **The Law Code of Hammurabi (2123-2080 B.C.).**

(a) First Code of Laws in the world, took care of the poor, widows, the old and the orphans. (b) Principle for punishment. Punishment for crime, on the basis of the principle of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth". (c) **Effects.** High-handed and insolent conduct of the rich and strong got controlled; life of women, slaves, poor, etc., became happy. (d) **Influence of the Code on other countries.** In **Palestine, on the code of Moses, in Arabia, Phoenicia, on Roman Jurisprudence.**

F. ART OF WRITING IN MESOPOTEMIA

Evidence of the art of writing available of 3600 B.C.

(a) **Use of Clay Tablets,** (b) **Script**—Picture, then of 350 signs; signs of the shape of the English alphabet "V", therefore called as the **Cuneiform Script** in the Latin language. (c) **Influence on others.** Adopted by the Jews and the Persians up to 1st century B.C., after 1st century B.C. they gave up the **Cuneiform Script** and adopted the **Phoenician Script of Alphabets.**

G. LITERATURE IN MESOPOTEMIA

(i) **Literature.** Available from 3200 B.C. on clay tablets, it is of poetry, epics, stories, etc. (ii) **Royal Library of Assurbanipal.** King Assurbanipal (660-626 B.C.) founded the 1st Royal Library at capital city, Ninevah, had thousands of books on literature, law, science, astronomy, etc., written on clay tablets. They help the construction of the History of Mesopotamia.

H. ARCHITECTURE IN MESOPOTEMIA

(i) **Cottages :** (ii) **Houses :** (iii) **Ziggurats** were temples of God in every city. Ziggurat was a tower of diminishing cubical stories surrounded by external stairs.

(a) **Tower of Babel** was of 650 feet in height, had been one of the wonders of the Ancient world (b) **Architecture under**

Nabuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar (606-561 B.C.) of the Chaldean dynasty gave patronage to Architecture, constructed (i) **Wall Around Babylon**—was 56 miles in length, a four-horse chariot could be driven along its top, (ii) **Palaces**, (iii) **Hanging Gardens**—Big trees, etc., planted on the terraces which were 75 feet in height, were one of the wonders of the Ancient world.

I. SCIENCE IN MESOPOTEMIA

(i) **Lunar Calendar.** Sumerians based their calendar on the phases of the Moon, was of 12 months of 30 days each, i.e., of 360 days, to make it accurate, added 30 days of an additional month whenever necessary. (a) **Influence on others.** People of Palestine, Persia, Arabia adopted it. (ii) **Water-Clock**, with its help, Sumerians calculated the time of the day as of 24 hours (day of 12 hours+night of 12 hours), divided the time of an hour into 60 minutes and a minute into 60 seconds. (iii) **Mathematics** : (a) **Arithmetic**—to count units of goods and to keep accounts. (b) **Geometry**—to construct buildings, to measure the areas of the fields, buildings, etc. (iv) **Weights and Measures** for weighing material, Sumerians invented weights; to measure cloth, wood, they invented measures : (a) **Weights**—Sumerian weight called as the Mina was equal to one pound (40 tolas), sixty Minas made one Talent; the weight, Mina, was subdivided into 60 parts called as the Shekels for conducting small transactions. (b) **Measures**—On a wooden rod, length of a cubit (about 18 to 20 inches) was marked, it was subdivided into smaller parts. (v) **Astronomy.** Science that treats of the heavenly bodies, including their sizes, motions, distances, position, etc. . (a) **Sumerian Astronomy.** Sumerians observed stars from Ziggurats and recording their observations laid down the foundations of astronomy. (b) **Chaldean Astronomy.** Chaldean astronomer Naburimannu gave a nearly correct calendar of 365 days, 6 hours, 15 minutes and 41 seconds, after him Kidinnu gave a calendar system which was nearer to the point of accuracy of the Modern calendar, Astronomical works of Naburimannu and Kidinnu were adopted by the Greeks. (vi) **Astrology.** It is a science which believes in the influence of stars and planets over human destiny : (a) **Sumerian Astrology.** Sumerians were the first people to develop the idea of the influence of stars and planets on human destiny, knew 5 planets. (b) **Chaldean Astrology.** Knew 7 planets, started their worship on particular days and gave the names of planets to the days of their worship, divided a month into 4 weeks of 7 days each, people of

other countries adopted names of the week. (vii) **Medicine.** Mesopotemians believed that evil spirits cause diseases, attempted the cure by magical formulas, etc.

J. ART IN MESOPOTEMIA

(a) **Relation of Art to Religion in Ancient Civilization of the Euphrates-Tigris.**

(i) **Sculpture.** Assyrians developed sculpture called as the Bas-relief ; (ii) **Other Arts.** Pottery, ornaments, furniture, etc.

K. LEGACY OF MESOPOTEMIA

Mesopotemian Mythology, Art of writing, Astronomy, Astrology, weights and bas-relief sculpture were adopted by the people of other countries to make life progressive.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Who were the makers of the ancient Mesopotemian Culture ? What did they achieve in Science ?
 2. Write on—
 - (i) Main characteristics of the Laws of Hammurabi ;
 - (ii) The Chaldeans ;
 - (iii) Sumerians ;
 - (iv) Assyrians ;
 - (v) Chaldean Architecture ; and
 - (vi) Chaldean Astronomy and Astrology.
 3. Discuss briefly the part played by Hammurabi in Babylonia in the development and government of Mesopotamia. (B. U. April, 1973).
 4. What circumstances did favour the growth of the Mesopotemian civilization ? (B. U. April, 1973).
 5. Give reasons for the rise of the Assyrian empire and mention the salient features of that government. (B.U. April, 1973).
 6. Clarify the relation of art to religion in Ancient Civilization of the Euphrates—Tigris. (B. U. April, 1973).
 7. Discuss the contributions of the ancient Mesopotamia to mankind in the fields of Science and Mathematics. (B. U. April, 1973).
 8. Describe in brief the system of medicine in ancient Mesopotamia.
 9. Discuss the writing materials and script of ancient Mesopotamia and mention the names of main works in that script. (B. U. April, 1973).
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OUTLINE

- A. The Land and the People.
 - B. The Sindhu Civilization.
 - C. Science in the Sindhu Civilization
 - D. Architecture in the Sindhu Civilization
 - E. Art in the Sindhu Civilization
 - F. Industry in the Sindhu Civilization
 - G. Trade in the Sindhu Civilization
 - H. Religion in the Sindhu Civilization
 - I. Social and Political Life in the Sindhu Civilization
 - J. Art of Writing and the Seals of the Sindhu Civilization
 - K. Legacy of the Sindhu Civilization
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A. THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

(1) **The Land.** The earliest name of our motherland—India—was Bharatvarsha. The people of India in ancient period regarded themselves as the members of the Bharatvarsha.

The Bharatvarsha acquired a new and internationally accepted name, “India”, through the historical writings of the Persians and the Greeks.

The Persians came in contact with the Bharatvarsha when their King, Darius I (522-486 B.C.) conquered territories up to Punjab during 517-516 B.C.

The Persians called the river Sindhu of Punjab in the Bharatvarsha as the river “Hindu” or “Indu”. They also called the people of Bharatvarsha, which has the river Sindhu, as the “Hindu” people and their religion as the Hindu religion.

The Greeks, who came to know the “Hindu” river through the Persians, called it as the “Indu” river. The land of the “Indus” river was called by them as “India”. The Greek historical literature spread in the wider parts of the ancient world and through

it the name of the Bharatvarsha as "India" got accepted popularly all over the world.

(2) **The People.** The ancestors of the present day people of India like the Kols, Bhils and Santals who live in the hills of Nagpur, Central India, Orissa and West Bengal are thought to be the original inhabitants of India by the historians. They are known as the **Pre-Dravidian People** of India. They were defeated by the People of the Dravidian race. No definite knowledge about the Dravidian race is available. It is held that the Dravidian race must have been a mixed race of the people of the Negroit and Mediterranean races.

B. THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

The people of the Neolithic Age who experienced shortage of food and grass to maintain their increased population and animals, migrated to the areas of river banks in India to make life comfortable. An attempt in that direction on the part of the people of ancient India has come to light recently.

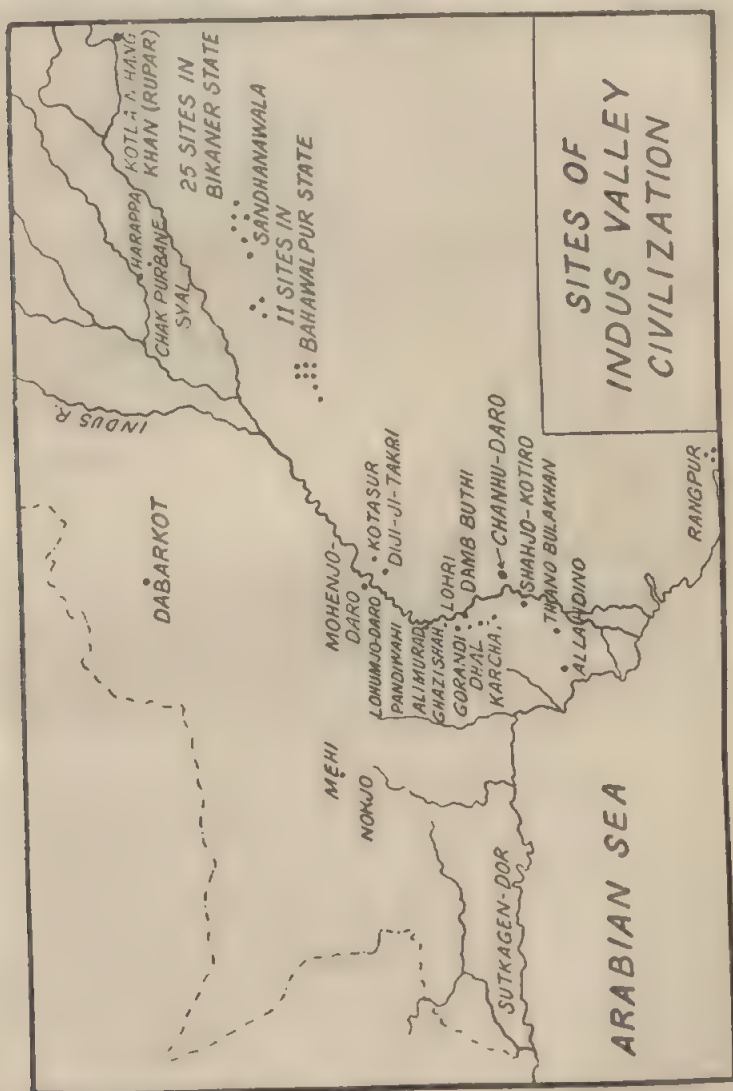
The excavations carried out by the Archaeological Department of the Government of India at Harappa in Punjab in 1921 and at Mohenjodaro in Sindh in 1922, have brought to light the Sindhu or Indus civilization.

It is one of the oldest civilizations in the world and it developed on the banks of river Sindhu or Indus.

(i) **Circumstances Favouring the Growth of the Sindhu (Indus) Valley Civilization.** Since on the banks of the river Sindhu (Indus) the soil was fertile and suitable for agriculture, the ancient Indians who settled on it in about 5000 B.C. quickly became a prosperous people. The large quantity of food grains which they obtained from that fertile soil with less of exertions and less work, relieved them from their worries about the availability of food for maintenance. That made them available ample time to think about the problems of their life and attend those by developing their institutions, arts, religion and sciences.

To put up their work in the matters of their institutions, religion, arts and sciences according to their own ideas and thoughts, the Indus Valley civilization people enjoyed an unobstructed course of life during 5000-2750 B.C. During this period the people of Sindhu (Indus) valley civilization enjoyed a peaceful life which was not obstructed by the attacks of the people of the outside

countries. This was because the highest mountains in the world ; the Himalayas in the northern side of India, the thick forests and



the Arakan mountains in the eastern side of India, the huge mountain ranges of the Hindukush and the Suleiman mountains in the western side of India and the Indian ocean to the South, the Bay of Bengal to the east and the Arabian sea to the west of India, proved to be great barriers for the people outside India to cross

and attack the inside People of India and conquer them for a considerable period of time in the ancient age.

This afforded a valuable advantage to the people of the Indus - Sindhu valley civilization people to live a mature life in an undisturbed manner for a considerable period of their history. As a result of this their thoughts and ideas found deep and permanent roots in the life and mind of the Indian people. That was instrumental in preparing the firm basis of the life of the ancient Indian people.

The people of the Sindhu valley civilization had made remarkable progress in the matters of science, architecture, trade, art and religion.

C. SCIENCE IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

The people of the Sindhu civilization lived a scientific and progressive life.

This becomes apparent from the study of their different sciences.

(i) **Town Planning.** The people of the Sindhu civilization had a remarkable concern for sanitation, health and orderly life.

The area of the city of Mohenjodaro is one square mile and the perimeter of the city of Harappa is $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Mohenjodaro is situated by the side of river Sindhu and Harappa is on the bank of river Ravi which is a tributary of river Sindhu. Both the cities were built according to a similar plan.

(i) **Roads.** The roads in both the cities were in straight lines and they crossed each other in straight line. The width of the main roads was about 35 feet. The other small roads were having a width of 10 feet. The lanes were 5 feet wide. The width of the main roads and the small roads and the lanes was uniform at all the distances. There was no encroachment made in their areas by the houses which were constructed on both the sides of those roads. To avoid the accidents of the vehicles crossing the roads, the houses on the corners of the roads were rounded off.

(ii) **Water supply.** The authorities ruling in the city of Harappa and Mohenjodaro had made the supply of water possible to the people by constructing public wells generally on every road. Most of the private houses had wells in their courtyards to supply water to their residents.

(iii) **Drainage System.** The town planning authorities in the cities of Mohenjodaro and Harappa had taken great care to maintain public cleanliness by evolving a well maintained drainage system. In no other ancient civilization such a system was followed. The public and private drainage system of the cities of the Indus Valley Civilization was an admirable one.

Every house in those cities had a provision of a bath-room and a drain to dispose of dirty water. The bath-room was usually well paved and provided with drains connected with the street system. The drains existed both on the ground floor and also on the upper floor if the house had it. All the horizontal drains were built of brick, while the vertical ones were of terra-cotta pipes with closely fitted spigot and faucet joinings, these were protected by special structures of brick work or let into walls.

The drainage pipes of every house were connected to the large drainage pipes of the sides of the roads which were 2½ to 3 feet below the surface. Those drains were led to the river in which they became empty. The drainage pipes were cleaned periodically.

(iv) **Dust Bins.** To avoid uncleanness on the roads because of the throwing of rubbish material on them by the people, the authorities in the cities of Mohenjodaro and Harappa had kept public dust bins in the streets. There also existed flues (channels or passages) for throwing out rubbish built into the walls of the houses leading to the bins in the streets.

(v) **Street Lighting.** On the roads of the cities of Harappa and Mohenjodaro, there existed Lamp Posts at regular distances to provide light facilities in the night to the traffic and to the people.

(vi) **Defence Arrangement.** Authorities ruling at Harappa and Mohenjodaro had taken measures to defend those cities from the attacks of the enemies. To the western side of Harappa and Mohenjodaro they had constructed a huge castle. In those castles elaborate arrangement was made to station troops, to store swords, lances, etc., to fight against the enemy troops.

Town Planning in the Asian Civilizations. The members of the Asian civilizations began in 5000 B.C. their civilized life on the banks of different big rivers. In the beginning, they lived in small villages. This was because their activity in the matters of industry, trade, and agriculture was not of a vigorous nature.

By settling down in the form of small villages, the earlier builders of the Asian civilizations had only laid down the foundations of their civilizations.

The people of those villages gradually developed their agriculture on the fertile soil of the banks of different big rivers and became unworried about the stock of grains which was necessary for their maintenance. As soon as they became free from that physical want, they employed their energy and talent to organize and develop their industries and trade. They also took interest in the matters of arts and sciences. By that busy activity, their villages, which had become busy centres of trade and industries got developed into the cities. That posed before them a problem of living a systematically arranged life in an healthy way in those cities. The dwellers of those cities tried to solve that problem by inventing the schemes of town planning. Town planning therefore marks a stage of advanced life in those civilizations.

Though in the civilizations of Egypt Mesopotamia and China there existed big cities and the people of those civilization seem to have lived an orderly life, the details of their town planning schemes are not available as yet for our study. Such details in an exhausted manner are available of the town planning developed by the people of the Indus (Sindhu) Valley civilization in India. Therefore it is said that the science of the town planning is a great achievement only of the ancient Indian people and it is an unique feature of the Indus (Sindhu) Valley civilization.

(2) **Weights and Measures.** (i) **Weights.** The people of the cities of Mohenjodaro and Harappa had evolved a system of weights to weigh materials and goods.

They had different measures of weights. The smallest weight was of 0.875 grams and the largest was of 10970 grams. Within the range of these weights there were other weights. The smaller weights existed in the ratio of twos and the larger ones in tens. The weight which was frequently used was that of 13.64 grams and it was approximately 16 times more than the smallest one.

The smaller weights were square and the larger ones were conical in shape. All the weights were of the proper standard and no variation existed in their weight. This proves that there must have existed strict control of the ruling authority in their use in economic transactions.

The people used scales to weigh goods. They used the scales having bronze bar with suspended copper pans. To weigh heavy goods, they used beams of wood and tied to them heavy weights.

(ii) **Measures.** The measure of length used by the Indus Valley people was a cubit, which was equal to modern 20.62 inches. Definite division of the inches was marked on the measuring rods. A fragment of such a measuring rod of bronze has been discovered at Harappa.

(3) **Medicine.** For living healthy life and to treat diseases, the Indus Valley people used different medicines. They used Silajit to treat dyspepsia, diabetes, diseases of the liver, rheumatism, etc. The cuttlefish bones were used by them internally as an appetiser and externally to treat diseases of throat, eye, ear and skin. The horns of the deer and antelope were used because of their medicinal qualities. The paste of those horns was used externally to treat the sprain of the muscles and to remove swelling of the muscles and joints. It was used internally to treat dysentery. Medicines prepared out of the leaves and the bark of the Neem tree and the Coral were also used.

All such medicines are found to have been prescribed for the treatment of diseases in the Ayurvedic system of medicine which developed in India in the Vedic period. It is, therefore, felt that the origins of the indigenous medicinal system of India are found in the Sindhu Valley civilization.

(4) **Mathematics.** Since the written records of the Indus Valley do not exist, it is not possible to say exactly about the Arithmetic and Geometry practised by the people of that civilization. But from the definite relation which they had settled between the different weights, it appears that those people knew and they practised arithmetical calculations. Similarly, the town planning system followed by them in respect of the laying down of the system of roads, drainage and construction of the houses of different sizes, indicates that the people of the Indus Valley had developed the science of Geometry.

(5) **Chemistry.** The people of the Indus Valley manufactured bitumen (a dark oily substance obtained by distillation from coal). They used it to construct the walls of the Great Bath Building which was waterproof.

The painted pottery, toys and clay beads of the Indus Valley

prove that its members knew the manufacture of the paints of different colours. Similarly, their ornaments made of Electrum (an alloy of silver and gold) prove that they knew about the chemical properties of different metals.

D. ARCHITECTURE IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

Like the people of other ancient civilizations, the people of the Sindhu Civilization had their peculiarities in the matters of architecture. People of the Sindhu civilization knew about the effective use of different constructional material and by its proper use they had constructed following buildings to serve various purposes of their life.

(1) **Construction material.** In the construction of the dwelling houses and larger buildings, the architects of the Sindhu civilization made use of burnt and un-burnt bricks, wood, gypsum, mortar, lime and bitumen.

The construction of the structures was made on artificial mud platforms in order to protect them from the floods of river Sindhu. The foundations of the building were taken much deep and for filling them unburnt bricks were used.

In the construction of the walls of the buildings burnt bricks were used for their outer or exposed parts and for the inner parts the use of unburnt bricks was made. Bricks were put together, generally laid in mud, but where mere strength to the structure was needed, in mud and gypsum mortar. The walls of all the structures were more massive than was actually necessary. This was to protect the buildings from the ravages of the floods of river Sindhu. The inner surface of the walls was coated with plaster, either by mud or by mud and straw combined.

Floors were paved in the flat bricks where there was not much chance of great wear. Where there existed more chances of great deal of wear and tear, the floor was constructed by laying the bricks on edge.

Historians feel that wood was considerably used in the architecture but it seems to have got destroyed due to the effects of the flood water of river Sindhu.

Archaeological excavations at Mohenjodaro and Harappa have brought to light the (i) dwelling houses, (ii) larger buildings, (iii) public buildings and (iv) castles constructed by their people.

(i) **Dwelling Houses.** They were of different sizes. Some of

them were of two rooms and the others were of as many as 25 rooms. Generally, there was an entrance to the dwelling houses from the street side. The houses had different rooms, containing wells and bath-rooms. There were living rooms, kitchen, lavatory, store rooms, servants' quarters, etc. All these were constructed around the open courtyard which existed at the centre of the constructed houses. In that open courtyard was conducted the work of drying the grains, pounding corn, washing clothes, cleaning utensils, etc.

Good arrangement to provide light and ventilation was made in every room. The doors and the windows of the rooms opened in the courtyard. The floors of the rooms were paved with strong bricks and internal drainage facilities existed in a corner of the kitchen, bath-room and kitchen.

The houses which had different storeys had staircases which went up either from the courtyards or from one or other of the vestibules (a small chamber between the outer-door of a building and an inner one) into which the other passages opened. The rooms upstairs were designed with bath-rooms from which water could be carried by earthenware drainage pipes into the drainage pipes on the roads.

All these housing arrangements suggest that the people of Sindhu Valley lived a comfortable, clean and healthy life.

(ii) **Large Buildings.** Indus Valley architects constructed following large buildings to serve different purposes.

(a) **A Big Hall.** In the several buildings of large structures at Mohenjodaro is found the structure of a big hall whose area is 80 square feet. It has in it rows of low benches having in front of them a main seat. Around the rows of the benches and the main seat, there are corridors. Historians feel that this hall might have been used for the assembly purposes by the dwellers of Mohenjodaro.

(b) **The Collegiate Building.** A great structure of a building whose dimensions are 230 feet by 78 feet and having extra thick outer walls has been found at Mohenjodaro. Studying the details of the structure, the historians feel that it might have been a residence of some high official.

(c) **The Granary Building—at Harappa.** This structure's area is 169 feet by 135 feet. Its area is divided into different

blocks of 50 feet by 20 feet each, to store corn. These blocks were so constructed that constant air-circulation prevented stocks of grains from becoming damp. Historians feel that the ruling authority in the Indus Valley stored in this building the taxes collected by it in the form of grains from the subjects.

(iii) **Public Buildings.** Amongst the large buildings which were probably for the use of the public at Mohenjodaro, the important most is the Great Bath building. Its construction reveals the details of the peculiar features of the architecture in the Indus Valley.

(a) **The Great Bath.** The area of this building is 180 feet by 108 feet. In its centre is a swimming bath or bathing pool measuring 39 feet by 23 feet with a depth of 8 feet. There exists a flight of steps leading to the tank on either end, and at the foot of the steps is a low platform for the convenience of the bathers.

The path of the pool is connected with a well in one of the adjoining rooms, and there seems to have arrangement for running off the waste water through a covered drain.

The construction of the bath or pool is remarkable as by constructing its walls with fine bricks, they have been made water-tight by a plaster of a thick layer of bitumen and mortar.

The bath has verandahs on all its sides. On three sides at the back of the verandahs are various rooms and galleries for the convenience of the bathers.

It seems that the Great Bath building had an upper storey which had several rooms.

It is not known with certainty as yet whether the Great Bath was used by the people of Mohenjodaro for secular purposes or for religious ceremonies.

(iv) **Castles.** A castle or citadel was constructed, both at Harappa and Mohenjodaro, by the Indus Valley people for the defence of those cities. The castles at both these cities had a similar plan.

The area of those castles was about 1200 by 600 feet. They had strong defensive walls whose height was nearly 40 feet. The walls were very wide and were constructed by using mud and unburnt bricks. The external part of the walls to the extent of 4 feet was constructed by using burnt bricks in order to give them added strength. At the top of the walls, the walls were cons-

tructed rectangular bastions or towers which were constructed above the height of the walls to keep a watch on the surrounding area of the castles. Troops could go on the walls or the towers with the help of staircases constructed inside the castles.

E. ART IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

(a) **Relation of Art to Religion in the Indus (Sindhu) Valley Civilization.** Out of the pieces of art found in the area of the Indus (Sindhu) Valley civilization, it is only its seals which indicate the relation of art to its religion.

On those seals, the artists of that civilization have engraved the pictures of the animals, plants and different signmarks which they seem to have worshipped with their religious ideas. The artists of the Indus (Sindhu) Valley Civilization also engraved the pictures of the deities which they worshipped. [See also H. Religion in the Sindhu Civilization.]

The artists of the Sindhu civilization had developed different arts. They were skilful sculptors and artists whose works enriched life in the cities of Harappa and Mohenjodaro.

(1) **Sculpture.** The most monumental products of the Indus civilization were the stone sculptures.

(a) **Stone Statues.** Out of a dozen statues found so far, the following stone statues of the Sindhu civilization depict the high graded skill of its sculptors.

(i) **The Head and Shoulders of a Bearded Man.** The statue is of 7 inches and is of a soft stone. The beard, eyes, nose and ears have been carved out on it with artistic skill.

(ii) **A Limestone (white rock)-Head.** It is of 7 inches in height. In it, closely cropped wavy hair held together by a fillet (a ribbon for binding the hair), shaven upper lip and the ears are carved out skilfully. Its modelling of the cheeks and lips is sensitive. From the study of its hollow eyes, it is felt that the Sindhu artists used to fix the eyes of the statue properly with the help of the image of some stones or material whose colour was similar to the human eyes.

Bronze Statues. In the group of the bronze statues found at Mohenjodaro, the following statues are of remarkable artistic skill.

i. **Statue of a Dancing Girl.** It is a charming statue of 4½ inches in height.

It is a statue of a dancing girl whose "right hand rests on the hip, the left arm, covered almost entirely with bangles, hangs loosely and the posture of the legs is easy." Her large eyes, flat nose and bunched curly hair have been shown with great skill by the sculptor.



"Dancing girl"

(ii) **Images of Animals.** Large number of bronze images have been found at Mohenjodaro. Out of those the images of buffalo and a ram or goat are of artistic skill.

(c) **Terra-Cotta Figurines (Statuette).** Several human and animal terra-cotta (baked earth) figurines (small statues) of notable skill have been found at Mohenjodaro and Harappa.

(i) **Human Figurines.** Out of those small statues, the most remarkable one is that of a man having a long nose, fleshy chin

and beardless face. A large number of the terra-cottas represent females. They are adorned with necklaces and their features have been shown with artistic neatness.

(ii) **Animal Terra-Cottas.** The animal figurines found at Harappa and Mohenjodaro are those of cattle, humped bull, buffalo, dog, pig, elephant, monkey and birds whose identity is not yet established. All these figurines prove the highly developed artistic skill of the artists of the Sindhu civilization.

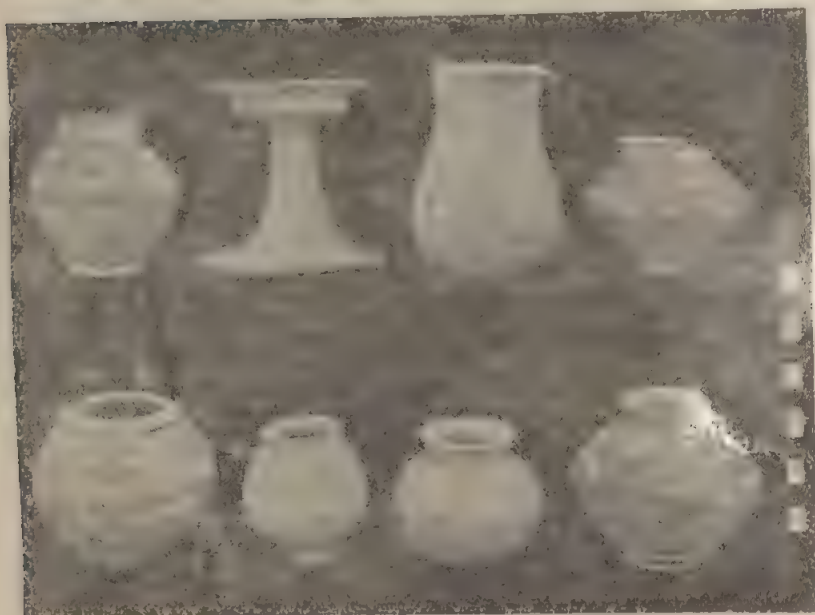
(2) **Minor Arts.** The craftsmen of the Sindhu civilization produced a variety of articles to make life comfortable and enjoyable.

(i) **Toys.** For the amusement of the children, the craftsmen of the Sindhu civilization manufactured skilful toys. Their terra-cotta two-wheeled ox-carts are found at Harappa. They also produced charming little ekka-like (Tonga or Victoria like) carts of copper; terra-cotta whistles in the form of a hollow bird with a small hole in the back or side; brightly decorated round pottery rattles with small stones inside and small figures of different animals and birds. The most artistic toy which has been found at Harappa is that of a bird in a tiny cage. The open beak of the bird and its other features are nicely shown with great skill.

(ii) **Ornaments.** The goldsmiths of the Sindhu civilization had developed their skill in the matters of ornament making to a highest point of perfection. They made ornaments of gold, silver, electrum (an alloy of silver and gold), copper and bronze. Of these metals they manufactured finger-rings, bracelets, nose-ornaments, necklaces, bangles, ear-rings, girdles, armlets, etc. These ornaments were of different skilful designs and of fine polish.

The goldsmiths of the Sindhu civilization had prepared a variety of beads of gold, copper, hard stones and clay. Those beads were used to prepare necklaces. The clay beads were painted with yellow and silver colours to give them a false appearance of gold or silver. These beads were probably prepared for the use of the people of low income group at Harappa and Mohenjodaro.

(iii) **Pottery.** The potters of Mohenjodaro and Harappa manufactured wheel-turned pottery of different sizes and shapes which could be put to a variety of uses like storing water, grains, salt, etc.



Pottery from Harappa

The pots were baked in round kilns with domed tops, pierced floors and underlying fire-pits. Most of the pottery was pinkish ware with a bright red or white coating. The pottery was decorated at times by drawing on it geometrical and floral designs with black colour. To give an attractive appearance the potters used on the pottery a glossy glaze.

(iv) **Metal wares.** The Sindhu civilization manufactured silver, copper and bronze bowls, cups and dishes. Those were of different shapes and were nicely polished.

(v) **Seals.** Over 1,200 seals are found at Mohenjodaro. Those seals are of soft stone. Generally those are square in shape with sides from 3/4 inch to 1 1/4 inches in length. They have a perforated boss (a rounded handle) at the back for handling and suspension. Some of the seals are round and a few are cylinder seals.

The artist who prepared those seals cut their stone skilfully and artistically with the help of instruments like a saw, knife, small chisel and a drill.

After cutting, engraving different designs like the Swastik, square and animals of different types like bull, buffalo, etc., the artists of the Sindhu civilization engraved on nearly every seal a group of signs in a semi-pictographic script.

Finally, they coated the stone seal with an alkali and heated it. That gave a white lustrous surface to the seal.

All the seals of the Sindhu civilization are engraved with superb skill.

F. INDUSTRY IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

People of the Sindhu civilization managed different industries to increase their material welfare.

(1) **Agriculture.** It was the main industry of the people of the Sindhu civilization. The carbon substances found at Harappa and Mohenjodaro of wheat, barley, and cotton, prove that the agriculturists of the Sindhu civilization cultivated those crops in the fields.

(2) **Metal Industry.** The people of the Sindhu civilization manufactured a variety of copper and bronze weapons of war and tools for different purposes.

(i) **Weapons of War.** The people of Harappa and Mohenjodaro used in warfare copper and bronze weapons like spears, knives, short swords, axes, daggers and arrowheads.

(ii) **Other Tools.** Single-edged choppers, knives, sickles, saws, razors of copper and bronze were manufactured by the craftsmen of the Sindhu civilization for the different uses.

The large number of the weapons of war and other tools found at Mohenjodaro and Harappa shows that the industry of metal implements was a big industry in Sindhu civilization.

(3) **Textile Industry.** Numerous spindle-whorls found in the houses of Mohenjodaro show that the people of the Sindhu civilization practised on larger scale the spinning industry. The material they used for textiles was both wool and cotton.

(4) **Brick Industry.** In the construction of the buildings and houses, the people of the Sindhu civilization largely used unburnt and kiln-burnt bricks. Their kilns to manufacture burnt bricks have been found at Harappa and Mohenjodaro.

Along with these main industries, the craftsmen of the Sindhu civilization also managed the industries which manufactured ivory

combs, ivory needles, copper, and bronze mirrors having wooden handles, and the items of the minor arts like statues, seals, pottery, etc.

G. TRADE IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

The traders of the Sindhu civilization had trade in South India, Rajputana, Gujarat, Baluchistan, Afghanistan, Persia, Central Asia, Mesopotamia, Egypt and Crete. This is proved by the articles and wares of the Sindhu civilization found in these countries.

The traders of the Sindhu civilization went to Afghanistan, Central Asia and Mesopotamia by land routes. They took their articles of trade to Egypt and the island of Crete in the Mediterranean sea by sea routes. The evidence that they used to construct ships and boats has been traced in the archaeological remains of Harappa, Mohenjodaro and the area of Sindhu river where it meets the Arabian Sea.

H. RELIGION IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

In the absence of the written records of the Sindhu civilization, it is not possible for us to know about the religious ideas of its people. However, from the archaeological remains found at Harappa and Mohenjodaro, the idea about their faith and beliefs can be formed.

(1) **Worship of Mother Goddess.** Numerous terra-cotta small statues of a female found at Harappa suggest that the people of the Sindhu civilization worshipped the Mother Goddess.

(2) **Worship of Lord Shiva.** That those people also worshipped a male God is suggested by some of the seals found at Harappa. On one such seal is found engraved an image of a male deity which has three faces. It has a horned head-dress and it is shown as sitting cross-legged on a throne. It is shown as surrounded by animals like the buffalo, tiger, elephant and rhinoceros. A deer appears to be under its seat. The deity is shown as wearing a number of bangles and having a pectoral (ornamental breast-plate) round its neck. This deity is regarded as a *trimukha* (three faced) or *Yogeshwara* or *Mahayogi* or *Pashupati* (Lord of animals) or **Lord Shiva** by some scholars who maintain that the people of Sindhu civilization worshipped it and some of them belonged to the Shiva-cult.

(3) **Animal, Tree and Bird worship.** It seems that the wor-

ship of different animals, trees and birds was followed by the people of the Sindhu civilization.

(4) **Belief in Spirits.** Several square or rectangular copper tablets, with an animal or human figure on one side and an inscription on the other or an inscription on both sides, have been found in the area of the Sindhu civilization. It is thought that those are the amulets (things worn as charm against evil) used by the people of the Sindhu civilization to protect themselves from the evil spirits in the world. This shows that those people believed in the presence of evil and good spirits in the world.

(5) **Funerary Customs.** People of Sindhu civilization followed the following practices for the disposal of the dead.

(i) **Complete Burial.** In it, people buried the whole body of the dead person and placed along with it, in the grave, the material articles used by him while living. This practice suggests the belief of the people in the other-worldly life of man.

(ii) **Fractional Burial.** In this practice, the dead body was kept exposed to the wild beasts and birds. After when the flesh of the dead body was consumed by the animals and birds, its remaining bones were collected and deposited with its skull in an urn. The urn then was buried in the grave along with the earthenware vessels, beads, etc., which belonged to the dead.

(iii) **Post-Cremation Burial.** The people burnt the dead body in this practice. After collecting its bone remains and ashes, they deposited those in the urn. The urn then was buried by them along with the material used by the dead.

The funerary practices of the people of the Sindhu civilization show their keen sense of hygiene and cleanliness.

I. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

The picture of the past social and political life of the people can be constructed with more accuracy by the historians if there is an availability of the written source material of that period. In the absence of the written sources, the historian is required to construct that picture on the basis of the archaeological sources of that period. Since like the literary sources, the archaeological source do not give us clearly the ideas about the human relationship, manners, customs, thoughts, etc., the picture reconstructed by the historian is a rough picture and not a full picture. Since,

of the Sindhu civilization, the written sources are not available, we can have only a rough idea about the social and political life in it, since the picture is based on the analysis of the archaeological data.

(1) **Social Life.** As there is a presence of the ornaments of precious metals like gold, silver and inferior metals and material like copper, bronze and clay, it is thought that the people of the society of the Sindhu civilization belonged to different economic groups. Since they managed several industries, it appears that they belonged different professions.

From the spacious houses in which they lived and the industries which they managed to produce the articles of art, it appears that the material well-being of the people in the Sindhu civilization was good.

It is clear from their textile industry, that in the Sindhu civilization, people used cotton and woollen clothes. Their town-planning, system of weights, making of metallic alloys like the electrum, etc., show that the members of the Sindhu civilization were educated and trained persons in the different branches of human knowledge.

(2) **Political Life.** The regularity maintained by the people of Harappa and Mohenjodaro in the construction of the roads, houses and the system of weights proves the presence of a stray government in the Sindhu civilization. That government seems to have been efficient and firm in its work to carry out rules meticulously. The presence of several public buildings and huge castles at Mohenjodaro and Harappa clearly shows that the government in the Sindhu civilization had a vast administrative machinery which possibly managed several departments.

But though the efficiency and the strength of the government in the Sindhu civilization is proved by its archaeological remains, the nature of that government—monarchy, republic, etc.,—cannot be understood by us because of the absense of its written records.

J. ART OF WRITING AND THE SEALS OF THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

Though since 1925, 2,000 seals having on them different engraved sign-marks are available for scrutiny, the historians, the archaeologists and the linguists could not decipher (read) those signs. Those sign-marks could not be interpreted in the context

of the languages and the scripts followed in the world. Therefore, it was tentatively held by the scholars up to now that those sign-marks were of a pictographic script practised by the people of the Sindhu civilization and they indicate the efforts of those people to develop the script for writing in ancient India.

Those sign-marks of the Sindhu civilization's seals have been recently deciphered by the eminent Indian archaeologist, Shri S. R. Rao. His study of those seals reveals the fact that the 30 words out of 360 words have been engraved in sign-marks by the writers of the Sindhu civilization belong to the Indo-European language and out of the rest of the sign-marks, some may belong to the non-Indo-European language. From the decipherment of some of the sign-marks by Shri Rao, it is proved that the people of Harappa spoke an Indo-European language.

Shri Rao's study of the Sindhu seals shows that originally the Sindhu civilization people used 390 signs for writing. By the time of the late Harappa period (2750 B.C.), those signs were reduced by them to 20 signs. His study also shows that out of 20 signs of the script of the Sindhu civilization (also called as the Harappa Script) 14 signs are almost identical with the basic alphabetic signs of Early Canaanite (people of ancient Palestine) and the Phoenician Inscriptions. From this, it is felt that the traders of the Sindhu civilization, who had trade contacts with Persia, Mesopotamia and Palestine, learnt the art of writing from those countries.

Out of the many words deciphered by Shri Rao, the words—baka, mama, dasa, tapaka, etc.—sound like Sanskrit words. Many of the seals belonged to the king. The terms used for king are **pa**, **pala**, **palaka**, **tra**, **oma**, **pta**, etc., all of which are used in the sense to protect or rule in the *Rigveda* and *Atharvaveda*. On some seals the name of the Mother Goddess as “Ma” is traced. On other seals appear the names of Kings Laba (unidentified) : the Asura **Taraka** ; **Malahha**—name of a country mentioned in Sumerian clay tablets and identified with Indus Valley, etc. From this data Shri Rao has inferred that “the names of the Harappan rulers survived in the Vedic Period and they came to be regarded as authors of certain hymns of the *Rigveda*. Some other rulers came to be known as asuras.”

When all these matters will get established in the historical analysis, there is every likelihood of having basically a new inter-

pretation of the contents of the Sindhu civilization in the near future.

K. LEGACY OF THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

The prosperous and industrially busy cities of Harappa and Mohenjodaro went underground in 2750 B.C. when the floods of the river Sindhu spread layers of mud upon them.

Though those cities disappeared, the legacy which they had left in architecture, science, religion, arts, etc., survived and enriched the life of the people of different parts of India in the ancient age.

The archaeological sites which have been excavated at Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Kathiawad and Baluchistan show that on the life of the people of those areas existed the influence of the matters developed by the members of the Sindhu civilization.

The buildings found in those sites are similar to those found at Harappa and Mohenjodaro. Those buildings appear to be the ones which the Aryans who planted their political power in India after 2500 B.C. pulled down in warfare.

In the areas of those sites, the people seem to have used the same pattern of pottery, ornaments, painted clay beads, etc., which the people of Harappa and Mohenjodaro were using.

The people of those sites also followed the worship of different Gods, Goddesses, spirits and the trees and animals whom the members of Harappa and Mohenjodaro worshipped. The worship of the God Pashupati or Lord Shiva is found to have been practised even by the Aryans in the Vedic age after when they managed to replace the political power of the members of the Sindhu civilization in ancient period. In the matters of science and the seals used by the people of those sites, the influence of the Sindhu civilization's science and the seals is traced by the archaeologists.

Thus the centres of the Sindhu civilization—Mohenjodaro and Harappa—guided the course of the life of the people of other adjoining areas in the ancient period.

MAIN POINTS

A. THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

(1) The Land. Earliest name of our motherland India was

Bharatvarsha. Through the writings of the Persians and the Greeks it acquired its name as India in the world. (2) **The People.** Earliest inhabitants of India were the Pre-Dravidian People. They were conquered by the people of the Dravidian race.

B. THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

People of the Neolithic Age in India migrated to the banks of the rivers to meet their requirements of food and grass. An attempt in that direction on the part of the people of ancient India has come to light recently through the excavations carried out by the Archaeological Department of the Government of India at Harappa in Punjab and Mohenjodaro in Sindh. Those centres of the Sindhu civilization have yielded the archaeological data which shows the progress of the Indian people in science, arts, religion, architecture, etc.

(i) **Circumstances Favouring the Growth of the Sindhu (Indus) Valley Civilization.**

C. SCIENCE IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

(1) **Town Planning.** (i) Roads ; (ii) Water Supply ; (iii) Drainage System ; (iv) Dust Bins ; (v) Street Lighting ; (vi) Defence Arrangement. (a) **Town Planning in the Asian Civilizations.** **Weights and Measures.** (i) Weights ; (ii) Measures. (3) **Medicine.** Used different medicines to cure dyspepsia, diabetes, rheumatism, etc. (4) **Mathematics.** From their system of weights, in which relation of the weights is regularly fixed, it gets proved that people knew and they practised arithmetic ; their system of roads and town-planning proves that they knew geometry. (5) **Chemistry.** People manufactured bitumen, various colours, etc.

D. ARCHITECTURE IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

(1) **Construction Material.** Burnt and unburnt bricks, wood, gypsum mortar, lime, bitumen, etc. (2) **Buildings.** (i) Dwelling Houses , (ii) Large Buildings. (a) A Big Hall ; (b) The Collegiate Building ; (c) The Granary Building at Harappa ; (iii) Public Buildings. Several buildings exist. (a) **The Great Bath Building.** Its construction proves high degree of architectural skill in the Sindhu civilization.

E. ART IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

(a) **Relation of Art to Religion in the Sindhu Civilization.**

Artists of the Sindhu civilization had developed different arts to enrich life.

(1) **Sculpture.** Stone statues were the most monumental products. (a) **Stone Statues.** Following stone statues depict the high graded skill. (i) **The Head and Shoulders of a Bearded man ;** (ii) **A Limestone (white rock) Head.** (b) **Bronze Statues.** Of remarkable skill are the following Bronze Statues. (i) **Statue of A Dancing Girl.** (ii) **Images of Animals.** (c) **Terra-cotta Figurines (Statuette).** Following are the notable small Statues : (i) **Human Figurines.** (ii) **Animal Terra-cottas.** (2) **Minor Arts.** Craftsmen of Sindhu civilization produced a variety of articles to make life comfortable and enjoyable. (i) **Toys.** Terra-cotta whistles, ox-carts, figures of birds, animals, rattles, etc. (ii) **Ornaments.** Of gold, silver, electrum (alloy of silver and gold), copper and bronze. Necklaces, bangles, finger-rings, ear-rings, anklets, girdles, etc., of different designs were produced. They were of nice make and polish. Also produced clay beads and painted those with silver and yellow colour for the use of the low income group people. (iii) **Pottery.** Wheelturned pottery of different sizes was painted with colours and designs : pottery was glazed. (iv) **Metal Wares.** Silver, copper and bronze bowls, cups and dishes. (v) **Seals.** Of soft stone, nicely engraved and having different designs.

F. INDUSTRY IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

People of the Sindhu civilization managed different industries.

- (1) **Agriculture ;** (2) **Metal Industry** (i) **Weapons of War ;** (ii) **Other Tools ;** (3) **Textile Industry ;** and (4) **Brick Industry.**

G. TRADE IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

Traders of the Sindhu civilization conducted trade by land and sea routes with South India, Rajputana, Afghanistan, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Crete, etc.

H. RELIGION IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

- (1) **Worship of Mother Goddess ;** (2) **Worship of Lord Shiva ;** (3) **Animal, Tree and Bird Worship ;** (4) **Belief in Spirits ;** (5) **Funerary Customs :** (i) **Complete Burial ;** (ii) **Fractional Burial ;** (iii) **Post-Cremation Burial.**

I. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE IN THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

As there is an absence of the written records, the picture of

the social and political life in the Sindhu civilization is constructed with the help of its archaeological sources.

(1) **Social Life.** People of the Sindhu Society seem to have belonged to economic classes. Lived a prosperous material life.

(2) **Political Life.** The form of the political authority ruling in Sindhu civilization is not known. But it appears that the government was strong, efficient and made its subjects follow rules properly.

J. ART OF WRITING AND THE SEALS OF THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

2,000 seals having pictographic inscription are found of the Sindhu civilization. Some of them show that people of that civilization spoke an Indo-European language and used some Sanskrit and Dravidian words.

K. LEGACY OF THE SINDHU CIVILIZATION

In the matters of Architecture, Arts, Science and Religion, the people of the areas of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Kathiawad and Baluchistan followed the ideas and knowledge developed by the members of the Sindhu civilization at Mohenjodaro and Harappa. In about 2750 B.C. though those cities went underground because of the mud layers deposited on them by the flood of the Sindhu river, the knowledge which they had developed guided in future the course of higher life of the Indians in ancient period.

TEST QUESTIONS

(1) Write notes on :—

- (i) Indus Valley Seals ;
- (ii) Indus Valley Art and Religion ;
- (iii) Town-planning in the Indus Valley civilization ;
- (iv) Science in Sindhu civilization ;
- (v) Architecture in Sindhu civilization.

(2) Give an account of the Indus Valley civilization and assess its legacy.

(3) Answer the following :

- (i) Why, in your opinion, did the Indus civilization disappear ?
- (ii) What is the Sindhu Valley Civilization noted for ?

(4) What circumstances did favour the growth of the Sindhu (Indus) civilization ? (B. U. April, 1973)

(5) Clarify the relation of art to religion in Ancient Civilization of the Indus Valley. (B. U. April, 1973).

(6) (a) Describe how Town-Planning marks the development of ancient civilizations in Asia. (b) In which of the ancient civilizations do we find town-planning ? What are its main features ? (B. U. April, 1973).

OUTLINE

- A. The Aryan People in India**
 - B. Literature in the Early Vedic Civilization**
 - C. Society in the Early Vedic Civilization**
 - D. Political Life in the Early Vedic Civilization**
 - E. Economic Life in the Early Vedic Civilization**
 - F. Law in the Early Vedic Civilization**
 - G. Science in the Early Vedic Civilization**
 - H. Religion in the Early Vedic Civilization**
-

A. THE ARYANS IN INDIA

After the period when the centres of the Sindhu civilization—Mohenjodaro and Harappa—went underground (2750 B.C.), the contents of the civilization in ancient India get known to us through the Rigveda. The Rigveda is the first literary source for the history of ancient India. It is in the Sanskrit language and in it is found the collection of the hymns (verses) composed by the ancient Indian poets during the period 2500 to 1500 B.C.

From the contents of the Rigveda it is proved that the Aryan people of the Indo-European race, whose sacred (religious) source it was, were of nomadic ways of life and they had not developed the pattern of urban life lived in well organized cities like the members of the Sindhu civilization.

This difference in their way of life with that of the life of the people of Sindhu civilization has led some historians to feel that the Aryan people came to India from some outside territory, namely, Central Asia. There are other historians who regard that the Aryans were of the Indian territory only and India being a vast country, it is possible that in its different parts people of different ways of life existed without having contacts with each other in the ancient age which is characterized by the lack of the means of communication.

Even though there exists a difference in the views of the historians about the origin of the Aryans in India or in the country outside India, they all agree in the fact that the Aryans replaced the political power of the people of the Sindhu civilization in India in about 2500 B.C.

B. LITERATURE IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

For the study of the Early Vedic Civilization, Rigveda is the only literary source available at present. That has led some historians to call the Early Vedic Civilization by another name—The Rigvedic Civilization. Since Rigveda is the earliest of the four Vedas, which are the sacred literary sources of Hinduism, the historians also call the civilization depicted in it as the Early Vedic Civilization.

The Rigveda has in it 1,017 hymns (verses) and they are arranged into ten Mandalas (sections).

Those hymns supply valuable historical data pertaining to the social, economic, political and religious life of the Aryan people in the Early Vedic or the Rigvedic Age.

C. SOCIETY IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

The Aryan people who conquered territories in Punjab during the period 2500-1500 B.C. settled in small villages (gramas). In the villages resided their tribes. The tribes were made up of the families.

(i) **Family.** The Aryan family was patriarchal. The father who was the eldest member of the family had power to guide and control the life of the other members of the family.

The Aryans followed the joint family system in which all the members of the family lived in the co-operation and affection with each other.

(ii) **No Caste System.** In the society of the Early Vedic Civilization the Aryans did not have caste system based on the birth of a person in a particular family which followed a specific occupation. Caste system based on the birth in a particular family developed in the society of the Later Vedic period in India. In the Society of the Early Vedic Period members of a family followed different occupations according to their skill and aptitude. Practice of the occupations was not hereditary. Members of the

Society did work in the government, military and trade matters without the consideration of their birth in a particular family.

There existed in the Early Vedic Society, the people who were known as the 'dasyu' or 'dasa'. They were members of the aboriginal tribes in India who were conquered in warfare by the Aryans. The dasyus or dasas served as slaves of the Aryans or in the royal household.

(iii) **Marriage.** Young boys and girls enjoyed freedom to choose their partners in life. Marriages of brother and sister and of father and daughter were not allowed. System of child marriage did not exist in the Early Vedic Society. Monogamy (a custom by which one man has one wife) was practised by majority of the members of the Early Vedic Society.

(iv) **Position of Women.** In the Early Vedic Society, the women were allowed to take education. After marriage a woman enjoyed a place of honour in the family of the husband. The wife participated in the religious ceremonies and festivals along with the husband. In that society, the custom of Sati or widow-burning did not exist. The childless widow was allowed to cohabit with her brother-in-law until the birth of a son. This practice was called as the Niyoga, i.e., a kind of short-term levirate. In certain circumstances, the widows were permitted to remarry. The women were under the protection of their father until marriage, of their husbands after marriage, and of their brothers if not married. In the Early Vedic Society, female morality was of a high standard.

(v) **Education.** Children of the Aryan Early Vedic Society received instructions from the teachers. The teachers imparted oral instructions and gave knowledge about the contents of the Rigveda to the students. Like the boys, the girls were also given education.

D. POLITICAL LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT OF GOVERNMENT IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

The Rigveda shows that the Aryan people who lived in the Punjab during 2500 to 1500 B.C. were living under different forms of government.

(i) **Forms of States.** Some of their tribes were under the kings, i.e., monarchical form of government, whereas the other

tribes were under elected leaders, i.e., the republican form of government.

(ii) **Heads of the States.** The Republican States or the kingdoms were small in area and were units of a simple tribe. The Chief of the republic or the king of the kingdom were called as the **Rajan**. By the closing period of the Rigvedic age (1500 B.C.) some of those kings seem to have conquered others and increased the extent of their small kingdoms. They were called as the **Samrat**, who held a position of high dignity and supremacy.

(iii) **Selection of the King.** Normally, the kingship was hereditary. Along with the practice of hereditary succession, the practice of selecting a monarch of their own choice from among the members of the royal family or of the nobility was at times followed by the people of the kingdom. This shows that the right of selection was exercised by the subjects in the earlier periods of the Aryan kingdoms.

(iv) **Sabha and Samiti.** Two assemblies called as the Sabha and Samiti existed in the government of the kingdoms and the republics of the Rigvedic period.

Members of the Sabha were the learned and the rich people of the state. The Samiti had, as its members, the common men of the state and its meetings were presided over by the king or the elected chief.

Both, the Sabha and the Samiti, had considerable powers in political matters and they exercised considerable checks on the head of the State.

(v) **Administrative Organization.** The members of the tribe constituted the Rashtra or tribal kingdom. Its basic administrative unit was the grama (village). Its civil and administrative functions were under its head, the Gramani.

The other important officer of the State was the Purohita, who accompanied the king or the chief to battle and helped him with prayers and spells against the enemies. The Senani (commander), who carried out the orders of the head of the State pertaining to military matters, was also an important officer of the State.

The head of the State had in his administration minor officials like the spies, the dutas (messengers), etc.

E. ECONOMIC LIFE IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

(i) **Agriculture.** It was the main occupation of the Aryan people in the Early Vedic age. With the help of the wooden ploughshare drawn by bulls, they tilled the soil of their farms, and with the help of irrigation, took the crops of barley (Yava).

(2) **Industries.** The Aryan craftsmen managed different industries.

(i) **Carpentry.** The carpenters manufactured chariots for war and race, carts for agriculture and transport.

(ii) **Metal Industry.** The Aryan coppersmiths manufactured metal utensils of copper and bronze. The blacksmiths of the Early Vedic Society produced weapons of war like axes, lances, swords, daggers, etc., of iron.

(iii) **Other Industries.** The Aryan people also managed industries which produced earthenware and wooden vessels. Those were used for the purposes of eating and drinking along with the utensils of metal. Tanning, sewing, spinning and weaving of cloth and plaiting of mats from grass or reeds, etc., were the industries in which the members of the Early Vedic Society worked.

F. LAW IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

In the Rigveda the regular word for law or custom was **Dharma**. The head of the State administered justice or the code of law with the assistance of the legal advisers amongst whom the Purohita was important.

The crimes like theft, burglary, robbery and cheating were punished with heavy fines. The fines were imposed in such a way that satisfaction of the person wronged would be achieved. The person who did not repay a loan was punished with a period of servitude to the creditor. The system of **Wergeld** (monetary compensation to the relatives of the man killed) existed in the Early Vedic Society. Mostly, the disputes between the parties were settled by the method of arbitration.

G. SCIENCE IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

(i) **Medicine.** There existed physicians in the Early Vedic Society who cured diseases like tuberculosis, anaemia, etc., by using plants and herbs of different medicinal values. The physi-

cians also practised surgery and cured fractures. They also treated and cured blindness, lameness, etc.

H. RELIGION IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

The religious life of the Aryans in the Rigvedic times was simple.

(i) **Gods.** The Aryan people worshipped the following gods : Sun, Rain, Wind, Sky, Agni (Fire), Indra (the god of thunder-storm), Rudra (the god of Storm), etc.

(ii) **Goddesses.** The Aryan people also worshipped the following goddesses :—the Earth, the Dawn, the Night, etc.

(iii) **No Animal Worship.** Though the gods are conceived of as animals (**Indra** as bull or the **Sun** as a swift horse) by the Aryan thinkers in the Rigveda, the people of that age did not worship any animal or followed **Totemism** (belief in an animal ancestor which leads people to regard that animal as sacred and worthy for worship).

(iv) **Belief in the Evil Spirits.** The Rigvedic Aryans believed that man is struck by misfortune or disease due to the work of evil spirits in the world. They believed that the gods ward off the dangers created to human life by the evil spirits. They also believed that the gods punish a sinful and reward a virtuous person in the world.

(v) **Methods of Worship.** To win the favours or boons of the gods to live a happy, healthy, long and wealthy life, the Rigvedic Aryans worshipped the gods by following different methods.

(a) **Conduct of Sacrifices.** To please the gods, the Rigvedic Aryans performed personhood sacrifices. The sacrifice consisted of the offering of milk, honey, grain, ghee, flesh and Soma, and was performed under the guidance of a learned priest.

(b) **Prayers.** The Aryans also sung prayers in the praise of different gods with a belief to win their favour. They sung collectively the hymns of the Rigveda in which the power and nature of different gods are praised.

(c) **Philosophy.** From the Rigvedic Aryans worshipped different gods, they regarded these gods as the manifest form of an **One God** who created the Universe. Therefore in their

hymns, they identified one god with another, or invoked the gods in pairs or together in groups of three or more. Thus the Aryan thought made progress from polytheism to monotheism in the Rigvedic period.

(vii) **Ethical and Spiritual Thought.** The ideal moral life according to the Aryans of the Rigvedic age was that of offering prayers, performing rites and living virtuously. They felt that a man committed a sin when he violated 'Order' in the moral and religious matters. They held that man broke the moral order in the world when he performed adultery, witchcraft, etc. They believed that such sinners are punished in the Hell by its Lord, Yama. Thus they believed that the good conduct (Karma) results into the good of the person and the bad conduct (Karma) results into bad consequences for him.

Out of the institutions and ideas of the Aryan people in the Early Vedic period developed their peculiar civilization in the Later Vedic period in India.

MAIN POINTS

A. THE ARYAN PEOPLE IN INDIA

The Aryan people of the Indo-European race whose ways of life were nomadic, replaced the political power of the urban people of the Sindhu civilization in India in 2500 B.C.

B. LITERATURE IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

Rigveda is the only literary source for the study of the Early Vedic Civilization. Its 1,017 hymns give historical data about social, economic, political and religious life of the Aryan people.

C. SOCIETY IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

(i) **Family.** Patriarchal : joint family system. (ii) **No Caste System.** Aryans did not have caste system based on the birth of a person in a particular family which followed a specific occupation. Members of the society did work in the religious, governmental, military and trade matters without the consideration of their birth in a particular family. People of the aborigin tribes conquered in warfare were the slaves called as the Dasys or Dasas existed in the society. (iii) **Marriage.** Majority monogamy was practised ; on child marriage. (iv) **Position of Women.** Place of honour in family and society ; widow remarriage was allowed.

education was given. (v) **Education.** Teachers gave oral instructions to students.

D. POLITICAL LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT OF GOVERNMENT IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

(i) **Forms of States.** Monarchical and Republican. (ii) **Heads of the States.** Head of the Republic or kingdom was the Rajan ; (iii) **Selection of the King.** Normally kingship was hereditary. Practice of selecting a king from the members of royal family or the nobility existed. (iv) **Sabha and Samiti.** Both organizations exercised checks on the head of the kingdom and the republic. (v) **Administrative Organization.** Important officers were the Purohita and Senani.

E. ECONOMIC LIFE IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

(1) **Agriculture ;** (2) **Industries :** (i) Metal Industry, (ii) Other Industries.

F. LAW IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

In the Rigveda, the regular word for law or custom was **Dharma**. Head of the state administered justice with the assistance of the legal advisers and the Purohita. Criminals were punished by imposing fines for their offences. Mostly, the disputes between the parties were settled by the method of arbitration.

G. SCIENCE IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

(i) **Medicine.** Physician treated diseases like tuberculosis, anaemia, etc., by using plants, herbs, etc.

H. RELIGION IN THE EARLY VEDIC CIVILIZATION

Religious life of the Aryans on the Rigvedic age was simple.

(i) **Gods.** They worshipped the Sun, Rain, Wind, Agni, etc. ; (ii) **Goddesses.** Aryans also worshipped the Earth, Dawn, Night, etc. ; (iii) **No Animal Worship ;** (iv) **Belief in the Evil Spirits ;** (v) **Methods of Worship.** (a) **Conduct of Sacrifices,** (b) **Prayers.** (vi) **Philosophy.** Rigvedic Aryans though worshipped different gods, regarded that they are the manifestations of the One God who created the Universe ; (vii) **Ethical and Spiritual Thought.**

Felt that a man committed a sin when he violated 'order' in the moral and religious matters.

Out of the institutions and ideas of the Aryans in the Rigvedic age developed their peculiar civilization in the Later Vedic Period in India.

TEST QUESTIONS

(I) Write notes on—

- (i) Religion of the Rigvedic Aryans ;
 - (ii) Position of women in the Rigvedic or Early Vedic Age ;
 - (iii) The Sabha and Samiti in the Early Vedic Age.
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OUTLINE

- A. Civilization on the Banks of the Ganges (Ganga) and the Aryavarta**
- B. The Spirit of Assimilation of the Aryans**
- C. The Social Organization of the Vedic Aryans—The Varna and the Ashrama System**
- D. The Degeneration of the Varnashrama System into the Caste System**
- E. Later Vedic Religion and Brahmanism**
- F. Literature in the Later Vedic Period**
- G. Science in the Later Vedic Period**

**A. CIVILIZATION ON THE BANKS OF THE
GANGES (GANGA) AND THE ARYAVARTA**

(1) **Civilization on the Banks of the Ganges (Ganga).** By the closing period of the Rigvedic Age, the Aryans had expanded their rule up to the banks of the river Yamuna in the eastern direction of North India. This was round about in 15000 B.C.

During 1500-600 B.C., i.e., the **Later Vedic Period**, the Aryans pushed their power in the basin of river Ganga (Ganges). On the banks of the river Ganga (Ganges) they developed their **Classical Civilization** which is known as the **Later Vedic Civilization** in Indian History. It is also known as the **Aryan Civilization** on the banks of the Ganges.

The salient features of this civilization are (i) the Social organization of the Vedic Aryans based on the Varna and Ashrama System ; (ii) Development of Brahmanism ; and (iii) the Production of the literature of the Upanishads and the epics, **Ramayana** and **Mahabharata**.

(2) **The Aryavarta.** The land between the river Ganga and its great tributary river Yamuna was known in the ancient times as the Aryavarta. Aryavarta means the land of the Aryan people. In this territory developed the classical culture of the Aryan people in the ancient period.

The word Arya meant a noble, civilized and an ideal person. All the members of the Aryan tribes regarded themselves as highly cultured people. Therefore, when they settled down in the territory between the river Ganges and the Yamuna, they called that territory as the Aryavarta. Aryavarta therefore meant the land of the civilized, cultured, noble and ideal people.

As the political and thereby the cultural hold of the Aryan people and their ideas about noble life spread all over India in the subsequent period of ancient history, India also came to be known as the Aryavarta.

B. THE SPIRIT OF ASSIMILATION OF THE ARYANS

(1) **The Aryan Conquest of Northern India.** The Aryan people who had settled down in the Punjab during the Early Vedic Period (2500-1500 B.C.) extended their political and cultural hold in the larger parts of India. In the later Vedic period (1500-600 B.C.) the Aryans brought the territory of entire northern India under them. Their rule also spread up to the Vindhya mountains in the southern direction.

To bring those territories under their control, the Aryans were required to fight wars against the Dravidian people and defeat them.

(2) **Assimilation of the Dravidians in the Aryan Society.** After conquering the Dravidians, the Aryans did not give them in-sultive treatment which is generally given by the conquerors to the conquered. In the later Vedic period, as and when the Aryans conquered the tribes of the Dravidians, they made attempts to assimilate the Dravidians in the fold of the Aryan society and religion. This process of the assimilation of the Dravidian tribes in the society of the Aryan people presented many problems before the Aryan thinkers of the later Vedic period. To solve those problems, the Aryan thinkers evolved the Varna and Ashrama system and tried to make the Indian society an ideal society and the member of that society an ideal person.

C. THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE VEDIC ARYANS—THE VARNA AND THE ASHRAMA SYSTEM

(1) **Four Needs of the Society.** The Aryan thinkers of the later Vedic period thought that the human society has before it four needs ; namely (i) of intellectual advancement, (ii) preservation of law and order ; (iii) production and supply of consumer goods ; and (iv) maintenance of cleanliness or hygienic conditions. They thought that their society would become an ideal society if its these four needs would get attended properly.

(2) **Persons of Four Skills in the Society and the Varna System.** To attend properly the four needs of the society the Aryan thinkers grouped its members into the people of four skills or classes as under :

(i) **The Brahmins ; (ii) the Kshatriyas ; (iii) the Vaishyas ; and (iv) the Shudras.**

The persons who were grouped together as Brahmanas and who formed a class of people in the later Vedic Society, were intelligent persons who had knowledge about religious matters and the total creative power called by the Aryans as the **Brahman**. The class of people who were called as the **Kshatriyas** had the required physical power and intellectual skill to fight warfare and to manage the government administration. The persons who belonged to the **Vaishya** class possessed ability to undertake and manage the work of agriculture, industry, trade and commerce. The people who did not have sufficient intelligence to manage the profession of skill, formed the class of people as the **Shudras**. The **Shudras** were to do the work of maintaining cleanliness in the society by carrying out the work of sanitation, sweeping, etc.

Since the members of the four classes were to do the work to satisfy the social needs according to their skill which impliedly suggested their liking for their profession, the classes of those people came to be called as the **Varnas**. The word **Varna** has developed in the Sanskrit language from the root 'Vri' which means to choose. The word **Varna** therefore suggests that its members had chosen for themselves the work related to it.

(3) **The Ashrama System to Make Persons of Ideal Life and of Required Skill.** While thinking about causing the satisfaction of the social needs, the thinkers of the later Vedic period also thought about making the members of different **Varnas** as persons

of ideal life and of required skills. Therefore, after taking into account the different desires or aims which man wants to satisfy in his wordly life, the thinkers of the later Vedic society evolved the **Ashrama System**.

(a) **The Four Aims or the Purusharthas.** They realized that while living in the world a man has an aim to fulfil his four desires, namely, (i) **Dharma** ; (ii) **Artha** ; (iii) **Kama** ; and **Moksha**.

They realized that a man has a natural and basic desire to live a virtuous and moral life, i.e. to live it on the basis of the **Dharma** (virtuous and moral order). They understood that man has wordly desires, i.e., to win fame, to earn money (income) and to achieve physical well-being by causing the satisfaction of his physical needs like hunger, thirst, etc. The later Vedic thinkers felt that a man has an urge to have a progeny and thereby satisfy his physical emotions and desires. This urge they called as the **Kama**. Those thinkers also visualized that while living a busy life of making efforts to satisfy his desires pertaining to the **Dharma**, **Artha** and **Kama**, the man also thinks about the God and the mysteries of the birth and death of man in the world. After thinking about the God and the mysteries of man's birth and death, the later Vedic thinkers thought that the man wishes to attain the **Moksha**, i.e., his final release from the wordly life.

The later Vedic thinkers called these four desires or aims which man tries to fulfil in the world as the four **Purusharthas**. They felt that if a man will satisfy his four **Purusharthas**, his life will become happy and ideal.

(b) **Scheme of the Ashramas or Stages of Life.** To help the man in making his life happy and ideal, the later Vedic thinkers evolved a plan of the **Ashrama** system.

Feeling that a man would live in the world for a period of one hundred years, the thinkers of the later Vedic time settled the different stages (**Ashramas**) in which the man was to live that life by performing meaningful activity. They, therefore, divided the hundred years of life of man into four equal parts, every part being of twenty-five years, and decided about the activity which a man was to perform in each of those parts to make his life meaningful and ideal. To those four parts of activity, the later Vedic thinkers gave the name as the **Ashramas** or stages of life.

According to the reasoning of the later Vedic thinkers those four **Ashramas** or the stages of life were (i) the **Brahmacharya-**

shrama ; (ii) the Grihasthashrama ; (iii) the Vanaprasthashrama and (iv) the Sanyasashrama.

In the first stage or Ashrama called as the **Brahmacharya-shrama** which was of the first 25 years of his life, the person was to receive education and instructions from his parents and the teachers. He was to study matters pertaining to religion, morality, occupations, etc.

After equipping himself well with the necessary training in the occupational skill, the man was to live the life decided for the **Grihasthashrama**. In that stage of life, which was of the next twenty-five years of his life, the man was to earn an income, get married, live a life of a householder, spend income in charity and look after his dependants.

In the **Vanaprasthashrama**, which was the third stage or the ashrama of his life and which was of the 50 to 75 years of his life, the man was to retire in the forest and getting detached from the worries of the family life, was to apply his mind to the study and understanding of the religious matters.

The last stage or the ashrama for the life of a man was the **Sanyasashrama**. The man was to live that way of life from his age of 75 years to 100 years. During this period the man was to study religious matters and instead of leaving a settled life at one particular place, was to wander or move to other places, especially to the sacred and holy places of pilgrimages.

It was felt by the thinkers of the later Vedic society that when a person lived a full life of one hundred years of the enjoyment and fulfilment of his desires according to the Ashrama System, he will die with contentment and attain Moksha (final release from the chain of rebirth in the world) and he will be given a place in the Heaven by the God for having lived a virtuous and moral life. They felt that those who will not follow this ashrama course of life will be penalized by God. God would place them in the Hell and they will have to take birth again in the world and suffer miseries in it according to their improper actions of the previous birth.

D. THE DEGENERATION OF THE VARNASHRAMA SYSTEM INTO THE CASTE SYSTEM

1) The Causes (a) The thinkers of the later Vedic Society allowed only the men belonging to the Brahmana, Kshatriya and the

Vaishya Varnas or classes to follow this Varnashrama arrangement or system. They did not allow the members of the Shudra Varna and the women of all the Varnas to follow the ashrama system, by the end of the later Vedic period.

(b) The people of the later Vedic Society lived a settled life. In the big kingdoms which were established by the powerful rulers in India, the people of different varnas and ashramas lived a stable life. The stability which they enjoyed led them to live a busy economic life having a number of industries. This led to the establishment of large scale industries in the later Vedic period in India. It developed a demand for persons of different skills in the industries. This demand for the skilled persons in the industries and the availability of the instruments at home of the industry or occupation which the head of the family was practising, led the children of the family take part in the work of that industry or occupation. When the children of the family acquired the necessary skill in that industry or occupation, they continued to work in that industry after the death of their father. This, after a period of time, settled the industry or occupation of the members of different families by the close of the later Vedic period and gave emergence to the caste system in India which worked on the basis of the principle of birth of a person in a particular family.

(c) The increase in the political power of the Kings in the later Vedic period and the well-being and the economic prosperity which accrued to their subjects, led them all to perform elaborate and expensive sacrifices to the Gods. The conduct of big and elaborate sacrifices demanded the services of the Brahmanas for a longer period. Due to this the Brahmanas were made to study intensively the Vedas and other pertinent works and acquire specialized skill to perform complicated types of different sacrifices. This established, by the close of the later Vedic period, the monopoly of the Brahmanas in the field of the religious knowledge in Sanskrit and made their work operate on the basis of the principle of heredity of the caste system.

All these causes led the people of different Varnas change into the people of different castes, which conducted their work and profession on the basis of the principle of heredity in the late Vedic period in India. Gradually, in the later Vedic period, the Indians started regarding the life of the caste system as an ideal life and developed a belief that the ways and usages of the caste system were ordained by the Vedas and thereby by the God. Due to this not to follow the ways of the caste system was regarded by them as

irreligiousness. This made the caste system a permanent feature of the Indian Society in the later Vedic period.

(2) **Defects of the Caste System.** (a) As in the later Vedic Society, persons were required to follow their family profession, even though they did not have liking for it, they became unhappy in life. (b) As the profession of the family was compulsory for its members, in that profession got included persons who did not have genuine skill to prosecute it. As a result of this, the progress of that profession suffered a set-back. (c) The persons of the higher castes, namely, the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas, even though they did not possess the skill of their professions, were given respect and honour in the society simply because of their birth in the families of their respective castes. Similarly, the persons of the lower caste, the Shudras, even though they were of ability and merit, were given insulting and inferior treatment by the society, on the grounds of their birth in the families which belonged to the lower caste.

All these matters generated conditions of unharmonious human relationship and unhappiness in India during the later Vedic period.

E. LATER VEDIC RELIGION AND BRAHMANISM

(1) **Later Vedic Religion.** The simple and liberal religious ideas and ways of the life of Aryan people got changed in the later Vedic period. This change in the religion of the people of India took place, as their conditions of life became different in the later Vedic period than what they were in the early Vedic period.

(2) **Causes for the Change in Religious life.** (a) After conquering the Dravidians, the Aryans assimilated them in their society and religion. In their composite society, the Indians of the later Vedic period worshipped the Aryan as well as the Dravidian Gods. (b) As the Indians performed elaborate and expensive sacrifices to propitiate gods, the Brahmins became a dominant factor in the religious life of the later Vedic period. The sacrifices were to be performed by chanting the hymns of the Vedas and after performing complicated and detailed rituals. This demanded the services of the Brahmanas to conduct the sacrifices. (c) Since the Ashrama system did not allow the facility to the Shudras and women to obtain religious knowledge which was regarded as sacred and which existed in the Sanskrit knowledge, they remained an ignorant people in the matters of religion. They followed religious practices according to the advice given to them by the Brahmanas in those matters. Therefore, what religious knowledge the people of the

early Vedic period possessed, the people of the later Vedic times did not have. (d) In the later Vedic period, the people who had become rich due to economic prosperity, conducted animal sacrifices in contrast to the simple sacrifices which were performed by the members of the early Vedic Society. (e) Due to the development of too much of the ritualistic practices in the matters of the worship of the Gods, the people of the later Vedic Society cared more to follow outward matters of the religion than to acquire the essential knowledge of the nature of God and the morality and virtue to be followed in life.

The contents of the later Vedic religion, which is also called as Old Hinduism, are found in the Yajurveda, Atharvaveda, the Brahmanas and the Aranyakas.

(3) **Brahmanism.** Brahmanism was a reaction against the unintelligent religious life and matters of rituals and animal sacrifices of the later Vedic religion or old Hinduism.

This reaction against the practices of the later Vedic religion developed in ancient India by 800 B.C. By 800 B.C. the thinkers of the later Vedic Society, who wished that all the members of their society should be happy and progressive people, found faults in the practices of animal sacrifices and human inequality followed in the later Vedic or Old Hinduism.

Those thinkers developed fresh ideas and philosophy which gave a new direction to the religious life in India in the times to come. The ideas and philosophical thoughts of those thinkers are stated in the text of the different **Upanishads** which belong to the period of 800 B.C.

(a) **The Idea of the Brahman—Supreme Creative Power.** The Upanishadic thinkers developed the idea that the Brahman is the Universal or Creative Spirit. It has created the world. It has also created the human beings and the animals in the world. The living human beings and animal possess the Spirit (Jiva) which is a part of the Creative Power, Brahman.

(b) **Theory of Rebirth Based on the Principle of Karma.** They pointed out that the spirit of the living human beings is enveloped in the body which is made up of the flesh, blood, bones, etc. Since the human body has its material needs to be satisfied while living in the world man undertakes the performance of different actions.

If his actions are moral and virtuous, the man will not commit any sin of harming any one in the world. Due to it the happi-

ness for all will ensue in the world. When such a virtuous man will die, his spirit will go to the Heaven and it will get absorbed in the total Creative Power, Brahman.

But if a man, because of the actuation of selfish desires by his bodily needs would perform sinful and harmful conduct towards others in the world would die, his spirit would go to the Hell and it will be penalized by God through different punishments. The spirit of such a man will not get absorbed in the total Creative Power. But on the basis of his actions performed in the last birth, God will give him rebirth in the world and make him suffer from its miseries. This giving of the rebirth of that person would go on continuously till the time he makes his life virtuous, moral and free from sin so that his spirit or soul would get absorbed in the total Creative Power, Brahman.

This reasoning of the Upanishadic thinkers about the total Creative Power and the spirit of man in the world is called as the **Theory of Rebirth based on the Principle of Karma** (deeds or actions).

(c) **Rejection of Animal Sacrifices and Outward Religious Practices.** In the light of their theory of rebirth based on the principle of Karma, the Upanishadic philosophers and thinkers criticized the conduct of animal sacrifices to propitiate the gods. They also told that the performance of rituals and ceremonies to win the favours of God were meaningless.

(d) **Emphasis on Virtuous Conduct and Knowledge of the Brahman.** The Upanishadic thinkers pointed out that unless a man was of virtuous conduct and unless he possessed the true knowledge of the Brahman, he will not achieve Moksha (final release from the cycle or chain of rebirth in the world).

(e) **Effects of the Upanishadic Philosophy.** (i) The theory of rebirth based on the principle of Karma made a profound impression on the minds of the Indian people since ancient to modern times. Due to the impact of that theory they have become a people who largely follow virtuous conduct and appreciate the good and virtuous matters of the life of the people of the other countries in the world. (ii) Many matters of the Upanishadic philosophy, especially its theory of rebirth based on the principle of Karma, was adopted by Lord Mahavira and Lord Gautama Buddha to establish their humanitarian religions which upheld the principle of human equality and ahimsa (non-injury) in India.

F. LITERATURE IN THE LATER VEDIC PERIOD

Though there exist a number of literary works of the later Vedic period, the most important amongst them, next to the Upanishads, are the great epics, the **Ramayana** and the **Mahabharata**. These two great epics have exercised a continuous influence on the mass-mind in India since the ages.

(1) **The Ramayana of Valmiki.** It is traditionally held that the great epic, Ramayana, was originally written by sage Valmiki in the later Vedic period. The authors of the subsequent periods of Indian history have made additions of different stories in it. The Ramayana is epic of twenty four thousand verses.

(a) **Its Story** The Ramayana has in it the story of prince Rama who later became an ideal King of the Kingdom of Ayodhya in India.

Story of Ramayan. In the ancient times, King Dasharatha of the Ikshvaku dynasty was the ruler of Ayodhya which is in modern Uttar Pradesh. He had three queens and four sons. His chief queen Kaushalya had the son named Rama. Rama was the eldest son of Dasharatha. Dasharatha's another queen, Sumitra had a son whose name was Lakshmana. Dasharatha's youngest queen Kaikeyi had two sons, Bharata and Shatrughna.

In spite of the fact that the sons of Dasharatha had step-brotherly relations in between themselves, they lived with attachment and affection towards each other. King Dasharatha got them all trained according to the Indian tradition in the matters of religion, customs, principles of justice, statecraft and the art and science of the use of weapons and warfare. After their training, Dasharatha got them married. The wife of Rama, Sita, was the daughter of King Janaka of Videha which is in modern Bihar. She had selected Rama as her husband, when according to the test set by her for the selection of her husband, Rama broke in twain the mighty bow of Lord Shiva (Shivadhanu or Haradhanu) in contrast to the other prince who had failed in that task.

When King Dasharatha became old, he decided to retire from the active affairs of his state. He, therefore, arranged to install his eldest son Rama as his successor on the throne of Ayodhya.

At the time when the arrangements for that ceremony were undertaken the step-mother of Rama, Kaikeyi, developed an ambition to obtain the Kingship of Ayodhya for her own son, Bharata. To realize that ambition it was necessary for her to make King Dasharatha deny the traditional right to Rama by which the eldest

son of the King succeeded his father to the throne. For that, Kaikeyi asked Dasharatha to grant the two boons which he had given her when he had become pleased earlier for the help she had rendered to him in defeating his enemies in the battle. According to the first boon she asked Dasharatha to grant the throne to Bharata. By the other, she asked Dasharatha to send Rama in the Dandakaranya (a forest in the Deccan) and in exile for fourteen years.

This placed King Dasharatha in a difficult situation. As a honourable man he felt it his duty to fulfil the obligations of the boons he had promised to Kaikeyi. But to grant the boons asked by Kaikeyi meant the unnecessary denial of the legitimate rights of Rama. Dasharatha was struck by sorrow as the grant of the boons to Kaikeyi meant to inflict injustice upon innocent and virtuous Rama who was in no way a party to the matters which had taken place between Kaikeyi and himself.

When Dasharatha was perplexed and did not know what he should do, Prince Rama came to his rescue. After learning about the boons Kaikeyi had asked and the predicament of his father to grant those boons, Rama felt that as a dutiful son of Dasharatha, it was his duty to fulfil the obligations of his father according to the Indian tradition. He, therefore, went to the Dandakaranya for fourteen years according to the wishes of his step mother, Kaikeyi. Since Sita felt that according to the Indian traditions a dutiful wife should share the joy and sorrow of her husband's life, she accompanied Rama in his exilement. Rama's step-brother, Lakshmana also accompanied them, as he had much affection and attachment towards both Rama and Sita.

When Rama, Sita and Lakshmana were dwelling in the Dandakaranya happily, the ruler of Lanka (which is regarded as modern Ceylon), Ravan, forcibly kidnapped and carried away Sita, in the absence of Rama and Lakshmana, to his kingdom.

Therefore, Rama and Lakshmana entered into an alliance with the different rulers and people of South India against Ravana. They defeated and killed Ravana in the battle and rescued Sita from his prison.

Therefore, when Rama had fulfilled his vow of living in exile for fourteen years, he returned to Ayodhya. There, his step-brother Bharata, who had selflessly ruled in the name of Rama and who respecting the legitimate right of Rama to succeed King Dasharatha had not occupied the throne of the Kingdom of Ayodhya after the death of Dasharatha, offered it to Rama. Rama, then was happily coronated as the King of Ayodhya.

King Rama made every effort to serve his subjects by giving the kingdom of Ayodhya a government administration which was responsive to the needs of the people. By his good rule, when he had established the happy conditions of life (Rama Rajya), an occasion to test his responsiveness towards the wishes of the subjects arose in the kingdom of Ayodhya.

One of his subjects, who was a washerman expressed his doubt before others about the chastity of queen Sita as she had been kidnapped and imprisoned earlier by Ravana. When Rama learnt about this, he became very unhappy. Though he loved much his wife, queen Sita, who was expecting a child at that time, he forsook her in the forest, to respect the sentiments and views of his subjects about **morality and virtue**.

Respecting the action of King Rama, when Sita was living a devoted life towards him, she gave birth to his two sons—Lava and Kusha—in the forest hermitage of sage Valmiki.

Sage Valmiki looked after Lava and Kusha properly and brought them up as ideal Kshatriya princes. When they were trained in the matters of warfare and archery by sage Valmiki, they happened to seize the sacrificial horse of King Rama, who had let it loose to proclaim his paramountcy in India before performing the Ashvamedha (Horse Sacrifice). When King Rama found that his authority was challenged by Lava and Kusha, he fought against them without knowing that they were his children. It was at that stage that King Rama came to know about Sita and his children. With them he returned to his capital city, Ayodhya. There, King Rama asked Sita to prove her chastity. Sita accepted the challenge and feeling disgust for the doubt expressed about her character, she requested the Earth (whose daughter Sita was supposed to be) to give her a place in her bosom if she (Sita) was of a chaste character. Since the character of Sita was chaste, the Earth got split up and in it Sita got disappeared.

While narrating his story, sage Valmiki has given to the people the ideas about a dutiful and virtuous son, brother, husband and prince according to the traditional values of life cherished in India since the ages. In that epic, sage Valmiki has also communicated to the people by narrating the defeat of demon Ravana, the King of Lanka (Ceylon), at the hands of prince Rama that in its conflict with the Evil in the world, it is the moral and virtuous that triumphs.

By narrating the conditions of the life of the subjects of different classes who belonged to the Kingdom of King Rama, sage Valmiki has pointed out in the Ramayana as to what an ideal ruler in India was to do for the welfare and happiness of his subjects. While narrating the work of the government of King Rama to make the subjects of different sections happy and contented, sage Valmiki has developed the concept of the "**Rama Rajya**" which has exercised tremendous influence on the minds of the rulers and the ruled since ages in India. '**Rama Rajya**' was such a life in the Kingdom, that in it, the King regarded himself as a servant of the subjects and he felt happy in the happiness of his subjects. In it the King is shown as forsaking even his dear wife, Sita, to satisfy his subjects. By narrating this incident, sage Valmiki pointed out that an ideal administrator in India was he, who sacrificed his own pleasure and happiness to serve the people well.

The ancient Indian concepts of the **Rama Rajya** and an ideal administrator have so much haunted the Indian mind that our present government has set before it an aim to establish the conditions of **Rama Rajya** in India.

(2) **The Mahabharata of Veda Vyasa.** The longest single poem in the world's literature, the Mahabharata, was composed originally by sage Veda Vyasa. It is of one lakh verses.

In the ancient times ruled the Kings of the Kuru dynasty in North India. Their kingdom which was in the region around modern Delhi was known as the Kurukshetra. The capital of that kingdom was the city of Hastinapur.

In that kingdom, complications arose when a member of the Kuru family, Dhritarashtra, was to become the king of the Kurukshetra State. This was because he being a blind person, was not eligible to rule according to the custom in ancient India. Therefore, his younger brother, Pandu became the king of Kurukshetra.

After ruling for some years, king Pandu, as a result of a curse, gave up the kingdom of Kurukshetra, and retired as a hermit to the Himalayas with his two wives, Kunti and Madri, and their five sons. This brought Dhritarashtra on the throne of Kurukshetra.

When Dhritarashtra was ruling at Hastinapur, his brother Pandu died. Therefore, the five sons of Pandu—Yudhishthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva—known as the Pandavas (sons of Pandu), who were children, came back to Dhritarashtra.

Dhritarashtra, along with his one hundred sons, the eldest of whom was Duryodhana, got educated the Pandavas.

When he came of age, Yudhishtira was consecrated as a heir-apparent by Dhritarashtra, But the one hundred sons of Dhritarashtra, who were known as the Kauravas, did not like this. Led by Duryodhana, the Kauravas plotted against the Pandavas, though owing to the blindness and the stop-gap nature of the rule of their father, Dhritarashtra, they were not legally heirs to the throne of Kurukshetra. Though the Pandavas foiled a number of plots of the Kauravas against their lives, feeling disgust about the evil-minded Kauravas, they left Hastinapur. When the Pandavas went from one court to the another as soldiers of fortune: in the court of the Panchala State, Arjuna won in a Swayamvara, Draupadi, the princess of that state. She became the joint wife of all the Pandavas in order to avoid strife between the five brothers. In the Panchala state, the Pandavas met their great friend and helper, Krishna, who was the king of Dwaraka. Soon after this, the blind Dhritarashtra recalled the Pandavas to Hastinapur and renouncing the throne, divided the kingdom between them and his own sons, the Kauravas. When the Kauravas ruled at Hastinapur, the Pandavas built a new capital at *Indraprastha* (near modern Delhi).

The prosperity and political glory which the Pandavas attained at *Indraprastha*, made the envious Kauravas think evil about them. They plotted to ruin the virtuous Pandavas. As the Kauravas were unable to defeat the Pandavas openly in the battlefield, they resorted to other methods to ruin the Pandavas. Duryodhana invited Yudhishtira to a great gambling match played with the help of the dice. As according to the custom of that age, one could not reject such an invitation which challenged one's ability. Yudhishtira played that match. In it, Duryodhana became victorious by practicing cunning and won from Yudhishtira, his kingdom of *Indraprastha*; his brothers (the other Pandavas) and their joint wife, Draupadi. From this total ruin, Yudhishtira survived when the Kauravas agreed to a compromise. According to it the Pandavas and Draupadi agreed to go into an exilement for thirteen years, and to spend the thirteenth year incognito, *i.e.* to live in that year in such a way that no one will recognise their identity. If in the thirteenth year some one recognised them, then the Pandavas and Draupadi were again to go into exilement for the next thirteen years. It was agreed by Duryodhana that the Pandavas would be given back their kingdom after thirteen years if they fulfilled these conditions.

After living a life of great hardships and facing dangerous circumstances, the Pandavas returned to Indraprastha after the agreed period of thirteen years. They, then rightly demanded their kingdom of Indraprastha from Duryodhana. But as Duryodha was intoxicated by the power and wealth he enjoyed; he, by giving haughty and insulting replies to the Pandavas declined to return the kingdom of Indraprastha to them.

As the Pandavas were left with no other alternative to secure back their kingdom than to fight a war against the Kauravas; they fought the famous **Mahabharat War** and completely destroyed the Kauravas.

After the Mahabharat War, Yudhishtira was crowned as a king. Yudhishtira and his brothers ruled for many years. They brought the land (India), conditions of glory and peace. At last, Yudhishtira renounced the throne, and installed on it, the grandson of Arjuna, Parikshit. The Pandava brothers, then, with Draupadi, set out on foot for the Himalayas. There they climbed Mount Meru and went to the Heaven.

While narrating the conflict of the Pandavas, who were men of virtue, with the Kauravas, who were persons of evil tendencies, in the Mahabharata war, sage **Veda Vyasa** has presented before the people of India, the conflict which is continuously going on in the world between the Virtue and the Evil. In that narration, he has put before the Indians the truth that it is virtue which triumphs over the Evil and has shown the defeat of Kauravas at the hands of the Pandavas.

The most important matter in Mahabharata is that which pertains to the rules of warfare. **Veda Vyasa** has pointed out the ideal conduct which the ancient Indians used to follow largely while fighting war against others. The rules which the ancient Indians regarded as ideal were ; "**a warrior fighting from a chariot might not strike one on foot ; an enemy in flight, wounded or asking quarter might not be slain ; the lives of the enemy soldiers who had lost their weapons were to be respected ; poisoned weapons were not to be used.**" India is the only country whose ancient civilization set such humane ideals of warfare.

(a) **Bhagavad Gita.** The most precious part of the Mahabharata is the **Bhagavad Gita**.

In the Bhagavad Gita, the author has placed before the Indians an ideal of doing one's duty in a selfless spirit. It has given the message that one must try to put down evil things in the world by

supporting what is good and virtuous. The Gita has told the Indians that they should not evade their duty of upholding what is right in the world. It has explained to them that they should be fearless and brave in espousing the cause of morality. It has promised them that if they will die in the defence of the ideals of high moral value, they will attain Moksha.

As the Bhagavad Gita has explained the philosophy of human life and has suggested the way to solve human problems in the world, it has become the source of inspiration to many Indian patriots and thinkers since the ages.

G. SCIENCE IN THE LATER VEDIC PERIOD

(i) **Medicine in the Later Vedic Civilization.** Out of the literature which the Later Vedic Civilization thinkers wrote in ancient India, their work on the science of medicine is of great importance. That work is named by them as the **Ayurveda**—the science or knowledge of life or health.

The **Ayurveda** was written by the Indian Scholars of medicine during 1500-600 B.C. This was a period of ancient Indian History when the people of India enjoyed the conditions of stability and prosperity. As a result of that the persons of the medical science could apply their mind to find out medicines to protect human life from the evil effects of different diseases in the world. They also evolved methods to prolong human life in the world by keeping it always healthy and free from the diseases. The system of those medicines and their methodology to make and keep healthy the human life is known in the world as the **Ayurvedic system** of medicine. It is one of the great creative achievements of the ancient Indian people.

According to the **Ayurvedic system** of medicine, the Indian scientists felt that the life of the human being in the world can be lived healthily for a period of one hundred years. For the guidance of the person who wished to live for one hundred years, the scientists of the Ayurvedic School of medicine prescribed different foods, fruits and drinks in the different seasons of the year. Those medical scholars prescribed regular baths for good and healthy living and settled the points of the regular routine life of the individual.

In the **Ayurvedic system** of medicine it was regarded that a person can live a healthy and long life if the even balance of the three vital fluids of the body—wind (Vayu or Vata), gall (Pitta) and mucus (Kapha) is maintained in his body. The Indian scientists felt that the imbalance of those fluids causes disease in the

human body. They also held that the blood (Rakta) should be present in its pure form in the human body by an adequate quantity.

To achieve and maintain the even balance of the fluids in the human body, the physicians of the Ayurvedic School of medicine invented and manufactured a variety of drugs and medicines from the Indian herbs, minerals and metals.

With the help of those medicines the Indian Physicians cured gastric disorders, tuberculosis, small-pox, anemia, gout, etc. In some of those diseases, the treatment suggested by the Ayurvedic School of medicine is the best even to day than the treatment suggested by the other medical schools in the world. [See also Chapter Ancient India : Gupta Empire— D. Literature, Art and Science in the Gupta Age]

MAIN POINTS

A. CIVILIZATION ON THE BANKS OF THE GANGES (GANGA) AND THE ARYAVARTA

(1) **Civilization on the Banks of the Ganges (Ganga) ; (2) The Aryavarta.** Land between the river Ganga and the Yamuna was originally called as the **Aryavarta**, i.e., the land inhabited by the Aryans i.e., a cultured and civilized people. As the political and cultural hold of the Aryans got established all over India, India came to be called as the Aryavarta.

B. THE SPIRIT OF ASSIMILATION OF THE ARYANS

(1) The Aryan conquest of Northern India : (2) Assimilation of the Dravidians in the Aryan Society.

C. THE VARNA AND THE ASHRAMA SYSTEM

(1) Four needs of the Society ; (2) Persons of four skills in the society and the Varna System ; (3) The Ashrama System to make persons of ideal life and of required skill. (a) The four aims or the **Purusharthas**. (i) Dharma, (ii) Artha, (iii) Kama, and (iv) Moksha. (b) Scheme of the Ashramas or Stages of Life (i) **Brahmacharyashrama**, (ii) **Grihasthashrama**, (iii) **Vanaprasthashrama**, and (iv) **Sanyasashrama**.

D. DEGENERATION OF THE VARNASHRAMA SYSTEM INTO THE CASTE SYSTEM

(1) The causes. (2) Defects of the caste system.

E. LATER VEDIC RELIGION AND BRAHMANISM

(1) Later Vedic Religion (2) Causes for the Change in

Religious Life. (3) **Brahmanism.** (a) The Idea of the Brahman—Supreme Creative Power ; (b) Theory of Rebirth Based on the principle of Karma ; (c) Rejection of Animal Sacrifices and Outward Religious Practices ; (d) Emphasis on virtuous conduct and knowledge of the Brahman ; (e) Effects of the Upanishadic Philosophy.

F. LITERATURE IN THE LATER VEDIC PERIOD

(1) The Ramayana of Valmiki ; (a) Its Story. (2) The Mahabharata of Veda Vyasa ; (a) Its Story, (b) Bhagavad Gita.

G. SCIENCE IN THE LATER VEDIC PERIOD

Indians invented and developed the Ayurvedic System of medicine.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Write notes on :—

- (i) The Bhagavad Gita ;
- (ii) Brahmanism—Its main features ;
- (iii) Varna and Ashrama System ;
- (iv) The Ramayana ;
- (v) The Mahabharata ;
- (vi) Civilization on the banks of the Ganges.

(B.U. April 1973)

2. Describe the social organization of the Vedic Aryans and compare it with the social organization of the ancient Chinese.

(B. U. April 1973)

3. Describe in brief the system of medicine in the later Vedic period.

OUTLINE

- A. Importance of the Sixth Century B.C.**
- B. Causes for the Rise of Jainism**
- C: Lord Mahavira and Jainism**
- D. Spread of Jainism**
- E. Development of Different Sects in Jainism**
- F. Influence of Jainism on the Indian Way of Life**

A. IMPORTANCE OF THE SIXTH CENTURY B.C.

The six century B.C. is regarded as the century of human enlightenment in the history of mankind.

In that century new religions were established by humanitarian thinkers in the countries like India, China and Persia. In Greece also a new thinking about the problems of human life developed in that century.

The humanitarian thinkers were required to establish new religions or start a new thinking about the course of human life because they found that the previous religious practices and ways of life did not serve the needs of the welfare and progress of all the members of their societies.

In India, in the sixth century B.C., new religions were established and new ways of life were preached by Lord Mahavira and Lord Gautama Buddha. Lord Mahavira established a new religion in ancient India called as the Jainism.

B. CAUSES FOR THE RISE OF JAINISM

(1) **The Caste System Neglected Merit of Man.** By the sixth century B.C. the simple and liberal life of the people of ancient India had changed completely. The liberal minded Indian who earlier respected the merit of man to give him a place of honour in the affairs of the society, started respecting the birth of persons in

higher families. They evolved the practice of fixing the duties and occupations of the persons on the basis of their birth in different castes. As a result of this, persons of merit and ability born in lower castes did not have scope to undertake work or occupation suited to their linking and ability. This caused unhappiness in their life.

(2) **Domination of the Priests (Brahmanas).** To win the favour of God, the Vedic religion had evolved elaborate practices and methods to perform animal sacrifices. The complicated nature of the performance of those sacrifices made the common man secure expert guidance of the priests (Brahmanas) to make offerings to the God. This made the position of the Brahmanas unique and dominant in the Later Vedic Society.

(3) **The Shudras and the Women Were Denied Facilities.** The religious literature of the Vedic religion was in the Sanskrit language which could not be understood unless one was to study that language properly. In the Later Vedic Society the right to study that language was denied to the Shudras and the women of all the castes. Therefore the Shudras and the women were ignorant in the religious matters and its philosophy.

(4) **Importance to Outward Practices in the Later Vedic Religion.** Performance of the detailed religious ceremonies made the religious life of the people expensive. Such ceremonies could be performed by only the rich persons in the society. In that, in the Later Vedic Society, a person who performed those ceremonies was considered as virtuous and pious even if he did not have proper knowledge about the essence of those ceremonies. This led the people of the Later Vedic Society attach more importance to the outward practices than to the acquirement of the knowledge of the principles of the religion.

(5) **Rise of Humanitarian Thinkers.** Though in the Later Vedic Society the practice of animal sacrifice was largely followed by its members, its rational and humanitarian thinkers were against it. As they wished the well-being and happiness of all the living beings, they showed their disapproval about the practice of animal sacrifices in their philosophy stated in the Upanishads. When their guidance in the spiritual matters was not followed by the members of the Later Vedic Society, in it emerged two rational and humanitarian thinkers to eradicate the wrong practices of the Later Vedic religion in the sixth century B.C. They were Lord Mahavira and Lord Gautama Buddha. Lord Mahavira founded Jainism and

Lord Gautama Buddha established Buddhism to remove the causes of human unhappiness in ancient India.

C. LORD MAHAVIRA AND JAINISM

(1) **Earlier Prophets of Jainism.** The Jainas believe that they had in all twenty-four prophets or religious teachers (Tirthankaras) who guided their followers in the course of virtuous life to attain moksha, i.e., to attain final release from the bondage of human life in the world. But barring their twenty-third prophet, Parshvanatha and the twenty-fourth prophet, Lord Mahavira, the historical information about their earlier prophets is as yet not available.

(2) **Prophet Parshvanatha (8th century B.C.).** He was the son of King Asvasena of Banaras. Though Parshvanatha was a prince, his mind did not find comfort in the luxuries he enjoyed. Because of his urge to give people a virtuous way of life and to remove their sufferings in the world, he gave up his comfortable life. He became an ascetic and lived a life devoted to study and service to the people. He taught the people of Jainism, his following four important teachings or principles after obtaining the real knowledge (Keval Dnyana): (i) Not to injure life; (ii) Not to speak untruth; (iii) Not to steal; and (iv) Not to possess any property. As according to his instructions, the monks of Jainism used white garments, the followers of Parshvanatha are called as the "Sevetamberas".

(3) **Lord Mahavira (540-468 B.C.).** He was the twenty-fourth prophet of Jainism.

(i) **His Life.** The original name of Lord Mahavira was Vardhamana. He was the son of Siddhartha, a chief of the Kshatriya tribe, Janatrika. Vardhamana was born at Kundagrama, a village in the territory of Bihar. Vardhamana was married to Yashoda. In his happy and well-to-do family life Vardhamana was restless. This was because like his parents, Vardhamana was the follower of the religion of Parshvanatha which taught to give up attachment of the wordly pleasures to secure real happiness. He, therefore, felt an urge to find out a way to seek real happiness.

To acquire real spiritual knowledge (Keval Dnyana), Vardhamana renounced his family life and became an ascetic. For a period of thirteen years he meditated on the problem of unhappiness in human life in the forest of Bihar. Vardhamana also wan-

dered from place to place, begged food, discussed problems of human life with other ascetics and made his body suffer from different sufferings. During this time Vardhamana gave up the use of clothes, as he thought them to be a bondage in his effort to obtain real knowledge about human unhappiness in the world. After a life of hardest asceticism, self-penance and meditation, Vardhamana at last acquired the real knowledge or "Keval Dnyana" to achieve human happiness.

As he was a worthy man of knowledge, he was called as the "Arhant". Because he had conquered his senses and passions, Vardhamana was called by the people as a "**Jina**", that is, a "**Conqueror**" (from **Jin**— to conquer). From this the words **Jaina** and **Jainism** are formed and they indicate that Jainism is a religion of a conqueror aspiring to make its followers "conquerors" of the passions of human flesh. The people popularly called Vardhamana as "**Mahavira**" (a Great Hero) who had subjugated the passions of human life.

After acquiring the "real knowledge" of human happiness in the world, Mahavira undertook the work of introducing several important changes in the life of the followers of Jainism. He also organised the Jain church on more definite lines. Due to the effectiveness of those matters which made Jainism a properly organised religion in India, Mahavira is regarded as the founder of Jainism. Lord Mahavira codified the previous unsystematic mass of beliefs into a set of rigid rules of conduct for the monks and the laymen (i.e., the ordinary followers of Jainism).

(ii) **Teachings of Lord Mahavira.** To guide the conduct of his followers on proper lines, Lord Mahavira gave them different principles and ideas for observance.

(a) **The Four Principles of Parshvanatha.** Lord Mahavira taught the four principles (also called as the four prohibitions) of prophet Parshvanatha, the twenty-third prophet of Jainism. Those were, not to injure life ; not to speak untruth ; not to steal, and not to possess any property.

(b) **The Principle of Chastity.** Side by side with the four principles of Parshvanatha, Lord Mahavira also taught his followers his fifth principle, to follow chastity, that is to remain pure in all matters of life. This was probably due to the fact that there was a decline in monastic morals during the period after Parshvantha in Jainism.

(c) **Nudity and Severe Asceticism.** As Lord Mahavira had

practised asceticism and had found in its severest forms the road to attain Moksha (final release from the chain of rebirth in the world), he commended his followers nakedness, self-torture, and death by starvation as the surest means of reaching final subjugation of human flesh.

(d) **No Belief in God.** In his religious teachings, Lord Mahavira was a believer in the dualistic philosophy of the Sankhya school and held that the matter and soul are the only two ever-existing elements, and there is no Supreme Creative Being which is responsible for the creation of the Universe. Mahavira completely denied the existence of God. He preached that the Soul (Atma or Jiva), by getting rid of the impurity of action (Karma), during the course of its successive births is able to achieve divine perfection. Lord Mahavira thought that God is only the highest and the fullest manifestation of all the powers latent in man (the most perfect man).

(c) **Life in the Apparently Inanimate Things.** Lord Mahavira also preached that all the things in the nature, even the things which seem inanimate like the plants and grass possess life and feel pain if injuries are created to them. The truth of what Lord Mahavira said in an age when science had not developed as it is in the Modern age, has been proved by the modern scientific discoveries. Modern discoveries attribute a rudimentary state of consciousness to plants and other objects in the vegetable kingdom.

(f) **Non-Violence (Ahimsa).** As Lord Mahavira thought that there was life in all the things in the Nature, he asked his followers to refrain from all acts of violence and killing. He asked the monks and the laymen not to eat meat. As he asked them to protect even the life of the insects, the Jainas strained their drinking water to save the life of the animalcules. The Jain monks carried feather dusters, to brush ants and insects from their path and to save them from getting trampled under their foot. They also wore veils over their mouths, to prevent the minute living germs in the air from being inhaled and killed. No Jain could undertake the profession of agriculture as it involved the destruction of plants and other living things in the soil. Due to these matters, in the observance of the principle of non-injury or ahimsa, Jainism went much farther than any other Indian Religion.

(g) **Rejection of the Authority of the Vedas and the Caste**

System. As Lord Mahavira did not believe in God, he rejected the authority of the Vedas whose creation was ascribed to God by Hinduism. He also rejected the Vedic rituals and the caste system. But he accepted the Hindu doctrine of Karma and the Theory of Transmigration of Soul on the basis of the Doctrine of Karma (Action), that is, the Theory of Rebirth or Punarjanma.

(h) **Starvation for Purity.** Lord Mahavira preached the suppression of the life element in the human body by a process of slower starvation to cleanse the human soul from the impurities of the present and past life.

(4) **Work of Mahavira.** (i) **Organised the Monks.** Lord Mahavira established an organised order of the monks (church) of Jainism to spread the Jain faith in India. In this regard, he was the first religious prophet in ancient India. Lord Mahavira's example to found the Church was later followed by Lord Buddha and Shankaracharya to organise the activity of Buddhism and Hinduism respectively.

Lord Mahavira himself travelled to preach his doctrine and convert others to his religion. He visited all the great towns in Bihar. He mainly carried out his religious work in the kingdoms of Magadha and Anga. The kings of Magadha, Bimbisara (543-491 B.C.) and Ajatashatru (491-459 B.C.) were the patrons of Jainism.

(ii) **Use of Ardhamagadhi Language.** As Lord Mahavira had the desire to transmit the real knowledge (Keval Dnyana) he had obtained to the common man in ancient India, he preached his religion in the Ardhamagadhi language, which was the language of the common people. That attracted to Jainism a good number of people of Hinduism, whose religious literature being in the Sanskrit language, was difficult for the understanding of the common man.

After establishing Jainism on a firm footing, Lord Mahavira died of self-starvation, in 468 B.C. at the age of 72, in the small town of Pavapuri in Bihar.

D. SPREAD OF JAINISM

(1) **The Work of Jain Monks and Nuns.** Jainism gradually spread in all parts of ancient India due to the humanitarian and religious work done by its monks and nuns. They went in even smaller villages and gave medicines, education and religious knowledge to their inhabitants. That work of the Jain monks and

the nuns which was carried out by them in the members of all the castes of the Hindu religion, attracted especially the members of the lower castes who were not given proper treatment in the society. The members of the lower castes of the Hindu society largely became the followers of Jainism.

(2) **Royal Support.** Jainism was given patronage and support by different kings in ancient India. The rulers of the Nanda dynasty like Mahapadma Nanda of Magadha were favourably inclined towards Jainism. The king of Kalinga (Orissa), Kharavela (second century B.C.) also patronised Jainism. Jainism, in course of time, spread in Southern India under the patronage of king Amoghvarsha (817-877 A.D.) of Devagiri (Modern Daulatabad in Marathwada). Jainism also spread in Western India and Rajputana. According to the Jain tradition, Chandragupta Maurya, the founder of the Mauryan dynasty in ancient India, was a follower of Jainism. The active support given by different kings to Jainism, effected its spread in different parts of ancient India.

E. DEVELOPMENT OF DIFFERENT SECTS IN JAINISM

(1) **Causes.** During the last days of the reign of Chandragupta Maurya, there took place a severe famine in Northern India. That famine lasted for a period of twelve years. Bhadrabahu, who was the High Priest of the Jain Church during that time, felt that the evil conditions of that famine would lead the followers to break the rules of Jainism. Because of this fear, he migrated with his followers to the territory of Karnatak in South India. But many followers of Jainism preferred at that time to stay in North India under the leadership of Stulabhadra, another Jain High Priest.

At the end of the famine, the Jainas who had migrated to Karnatak and had preserved the ways of life strictly according to religious principles, returned to Northern India. They found that their Northern brothers had started the use of white garments. They had also given up the strict rules for the observance of the principle of Ahimsa.

Due to the difference of opinion between them there arose two sects in Jainism ; (i) The Digambaras (Naked), and (ii) The Shvetambaras (User of white clothes).

(2) **The Sects.** (i) **The Digambaras.** The followers of this sect strictly follow the severe rules laid down by Lord Mahavira.

(ii) **The Shvetambaras.** The followers of this sect follow the rules of the Mahavira with minor modifications to adjust themselves with the normal ways of life. For example, in contrast to the Digambaras who remain naked, the Shvetambaras use white clothes and have written the religious literature in the Sanskrit language. The Digambaras have written their religious literature in the Ardhamagadhi language.

(iii) **The Ajivakas.** A disciple of Lord Mahavira, Ghosala Maskariputra broke away from Mahavira and founded the Ajivaka sect in the sixth century B.C. This sect observed complete nudity and discipline as taught by Mahavira but it did not believe in the Theory of Rebirth and the law of Karma as was taught by Mahavira.

F. INFLUENCE OF JAINISM ON THE INDIAN WAY OF LIFE

The insistence of Lord Mahavira on the observance of the principle of Chastity (Purity) and Ahimsa made a profound influence on the mind of the Indian people. Especially, the principle of Ahimsa (non-injury or non-violence) which was initiated by Lord Mahavira gave distinct turn to the Indian character and way of thinking about the problems of human life in the world. The adoption of that principle in the teachings of Lord Buddha who founded Buddhism, and the absorption of that principle in the Hindu philosophy by Shankaracharya made the Indian way of life humanitarian and tolerant in spirit.

MAIN POINTS

A. IMPORTANCE OF THE SIXTH CENTURY B.C.

The sixth century B.C. is the century of human enlightenment in the history of mankind. As the previous religious practices and ways of life did not serve the needs of the welfare and progress of all the members of their societies, the prophets and thinkers in India, China, Persia and Greece founded new religions and developed new thoughts. In the sixth century B.C., in India Lord Mahavira and Lord Gautama Buddha established, respectively, Jainism and Buddhism.

B. CAUSES FOR THE RISE OF JAINISM

(1) **The Caste System Neglected Merit of Man ;** (2) **Domination of the Priest (Brahmanas) ;** (3) **The Shudras and the Women were denied Facilities ;** (4) **Importance to Outward Practices in the Later Vedic Religion ;** (5) **Rise of Humanitarian Thinkers.**

C. LORD MAHAVIRA AND JAINISM

(1) **Earlier Prophets of Jainism** ; (2) **Prophet Parshvauatha** (8th century B.C.) Was the 23rd Prophet who taught the principles (i) **Not to injure life** ; (ii) **Not to speak untruth** ; (iii) **Not to steal** ; and (iv) **Not to possess any property**. His followers used white clothes and are therefore called as the "Shvetambaras",. (3) **Lord Mahavira (540-468 B.C.)**. Was the 24th prophet. (i) **His Life**. Left his family life and becoming an ascetic Vardhamana obtained real knowledge (Keval Dnyana) to make human life happy in the world. After obtaining the real knowledge by hard asceticism and meditation, Vardhamana, who was called as a Mahavira (a Great Hero) by the people, gave that knowledge to the people. He was also called as the "Jina" (Conqueror) by the people. From it the words Jaina and Jainism are formed. As Mahavira organized the Jain church on more definite lines, he is regarded as the founder of Jainism. (ii) **Teachings of Lord Mahavira** (a) **The Four Principles of Parshvanatha** ; (b) **The Principle of Chastity** ; (c) **Nudity and Severe Asceticism** ; (d) **No Belief in God** (e) **Life in the Apparently Inanimate Things** ; (f) **Non-Violence (Ahimsa)** ; (g) **Rejection of the Authority of the Vedas and the Caste System** ; and (h) **Starvation for Purity**. (4) **Work of Mahavira**. (i) **Organised the Monks** ; (ii) **Use of the Ardhamagadhi Language**.

D. SPREAD OF JAINISM

(1) **The Work of Jain Monks and Nuns** ; (2) **Royal Support**.

E. DEVELOPMENT OF DIFFERENT SECTS IN JAINISM

(1) **Causes** ; (2) **The Sects** : (i) **The Digambaras**, (ii) **The Shvetambaras** ; and (iii) **The Ajivakas**.

F. INFLUENCE OF JAINISM ON THE INDIAN WAY OF LIFE

Principle of Ahimsa (non-injury or non-violence) initiated by Lord Mahavira gave a distinct turn to the Indian character and way of thinking about the problems of human life in the world. That principle which was adopted in their teachings by Lord Buddha and Shankaracharya made the Indian way of life humanitarian and tolerant in spirit.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Write notes on :

- (i) Teachings and work of Lord Mahavira ;
- (ii) Causes for the rise of Jainism.

(For additional questions on Jainism, see the Test Questions of chapter 9).

OUTLINE

- A. Causes for the rise of Buddhism
- B. Prince Siddhartha Becomes Mahatma or Lord Buddha
- C. Teachings of Mahatma or Lord Gautama Buddha
- D. Hinayanism And Mahayanism
- E. Spread of Buddhism
- F. Effects of Buddhism.
- G. Buddhist Architecture.

A. CAUSES FOR THE RISE OF BUDDHISM

(i) **Evil Practices of the Caste System.** The caste system which had developed in ancient Hindu society by the 6th century B.C. functioned on the basis of the birth of a person in a particular family and not his merit, skill or ability.

The status of a person in the society was decided by the caste to which he belonged. His occupation was settled by his caste. The Shudras and the women were denied the right to study the religious literature.

(ii) **Domination of the Brahmanas in Religion.** By the 6th century B.C. Hinduism had developed the practice of offering animal sacrifices to win the favour of the Gods. The sacrificial rituals were complicated. Without the services of the Brahmanas, those rituals could not be followed properly. This brought the common men of the Hindu Society under the control and domination of the Brahmanas.

(iii) **Importance to outward Practices in Hinduism.** It was believed by the people of Hinduism that if they performed religious ceremonies, they will win the favour of the Gods. As a result, they did not care largely to know the religious essence of the principles and practices of Hinduism.

(iv) **Religious Literature in Sanskrit.** The literature of Hinduism was written in the Sanskrit language. Common men found

that language difficult. So they failed to understand the essence of the matters stated in that literature. To get it known, they were required to seek help of the Brahmanas who knew the Sanskrit language.

B. PRINCE SIDDHARTHA BECOMES MAHATMA OR LORD BUDDHA

All these causes disturbed the mind of Prince¹ Siddhartha (566-483 B.C.), the son of the King of Kapilavastu (in modern Nepal Tarai), Shuddhodana, of the Gautama family.

Being a sensitive and humanitarian soul, he became sad by seeing the ignorance of the followers of Hinduism in knowing the essence of its noble principles. He became unhappy as the practices of the caste system of the Hindu society gave facility to study religious literature not to all of its members but only to those who were born in higher castes.

Alongwith Hinduism, there also existed another religion in India which was established by Lord Mahavira in the 6th Century B.C. It was Jainism. In it, Lord Mahavira had stated the principles which rejected the caste system of Hinduism based on the principle of human birth. Rejecting the belief of Hinduism that the God had given its religious literature of the Vedas in the Sanskrit language, he made the religious knowledge of Jainism available to all his followers in the Ardhamagadhi language which they could follow easily. But Lord Mahavira had prescribed a strict code of conduct of fasting, penances, etc., for his followers to obtain real knowledge about human life and its problems. Lord Mahavira's direction to mortify the flesh (body) and thereby the selfish human desires for escaping the chain of re-birth was difficult for the persons of common ability to follow.

To make that effort, prince Siddhartha renounced his royal and family life. He went in the forest and to obtain real knowledge (about the human life and its problems), practiced the Yogic methods of mortifying his flesh and its human desire which were suggested by the Hinduism and Jainism to free one's self from the cycle of rebirth.

But he soon found that those practices made his body suffer restlessness and pains and did not give him the real knowledge which he wanted about the God and the human life. He therefore gave up the fast which he had undertaken. After taking

food at Gaya, when he was sitting in meditation under a Pipal tree and when his body had become free from restlessness and pains, he obtained the real knowledge about the human life.

As prince Siddhartha found out the great truth to end human sorrow, he was called by the people as the Mahatma or Buddha the Enlightened One that is, a man who had real knowledge. As a result, his religion came to be known as "Buddhism", that is, the religion of the "Enlightened One"—aiming at the enlightenment of its followers.

C. TEACHINGS OF MAHATMA OR LORD GAUTAMA BUDDHA

Mahatma or Lord Gautama Buddha regarded that ignorance is the root of all sorrow in human life in the world. To remove the ignorance about the matters in human mind, he decided to give his real knowledge to the people to end their sorrow.

In his first sermon at Sarnath, near Banaras, he gave his real knowledge to the people by stating the "Four Noble Truths" or the "Arya Satyani".

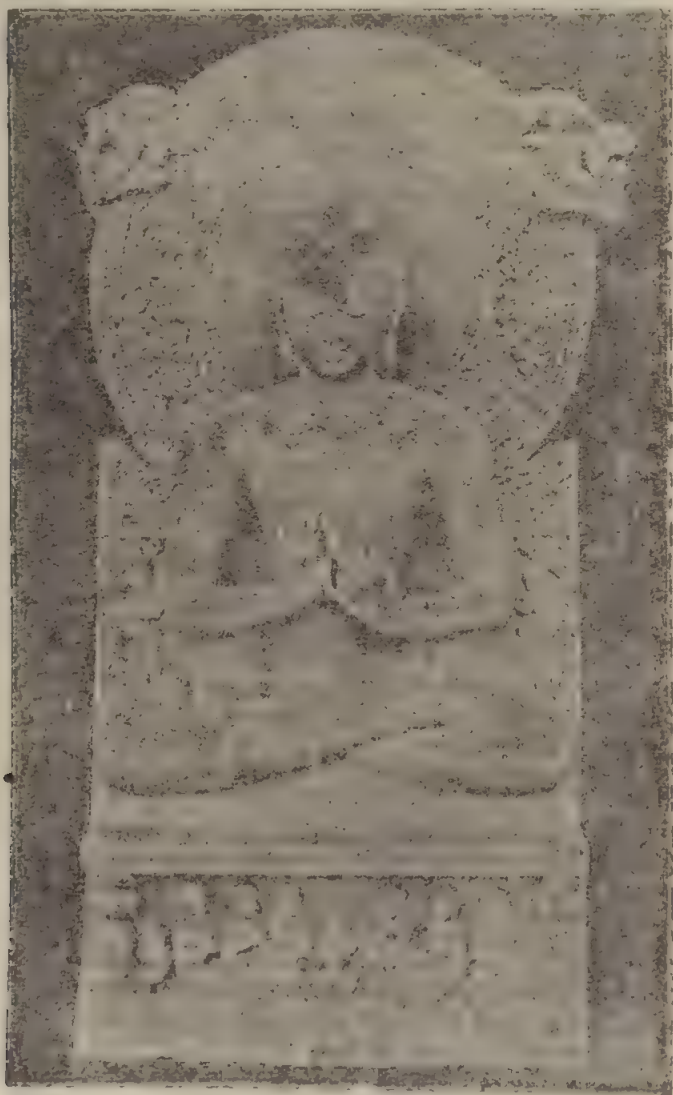
(1) **Four Noble Truths or the Arya Satyani.** In the world, (i) life (existence) is full of sorrow or suffering; (ii) Sorrow or suffering is created in the world due to the selfish desires (Trishna) of the human beings; (iii) If the selfish desires (Trishna) of the human beings remain unfulfilled, they take rebirth in the world to fulfil them and again suffer from sorrow. Not to have rebirth and thereby suffering, is the highest good, that is, "Nirvana" or "Freedom". Therefore to avoid rebirth and suffering, men must give up all their selfish desires (Trishna); and (iv) Men will not have selfish desires (Trishna) if they follow the Eightfold Path.

(3) **The Eightfold Path or The Middle Path.** Lord Buddha felt that if the human beings would follow right or correct course of conduct, they will be able to get rid of their selfish desires. Therefore he preached that they should have (i) Right Views, (ii) Right Resolve, (iii) Right Speech, (iv) Right Conduct (v) Right Livelihood, (vi) Right Effort, (vii) Right Recollection, and (viii) Right Meditation.

Lord Buddha called this way of right conduct or path to live life as the Noble or Right Path or Middle Path as it lay between extreme self-indulgence and asceticism.

Buddha explained to the people from his own experience of

obtaining 'real knowledge' that self-torture could not overcome selfish desires (Trishna) or bring about an escape from rebirth and its attendant suffering. He also pointed out that by conducting animal sacrifices or by chanting the Vedic hymns, one could not get rid of the selfish desires from human mind.



Mahatma Buddha

(3) **Law of Karma and Moral Life.** Lord Buddha laid much stress upon the Law of Karma (action), and explained to the people that "the state of a man in this life and the next, depends upon his own acts. No sacrifice to the gods can wash away sin, no prayer of any priest, no prayer of any man can do himself or any other man any good. What a man sows that he reaps. This is the Law of Dharma that works in the universe and this all must obey. This law never changes. A man, therefore, is what he makes himself. If he sins no more, he dies no more, and when he dies no more, he is born no more, and thus comes to live the life of final bliss (happiness and freedom by complete release from the cycle of Birth)". Thus, Lord Buddha taught people how to live a life of virtue and morality.

(4) **No Belief in God and the Vedas.** In his teachings, Lord Buddha rejected the authority of the Vedas. But in the Buddhist scheme of the world, there is no room for God. Buddhists believe in Matter and Soul as two Self-existent entities.

(5) **No animal Sacrifices and Idol Worship.** Lord Buddha directed the people not to perform animal sacrifices and worship idols. He laid emphasis on moral (ethical) conduct.

(6) **Use of the Pali Language.** Lord Buddha preached in the Pali language which was the language of the common men in the kingdoms of Kosala and Magadha. By that even the ordinary persons understood the essence of Buddhism. That made Buddhism a popular religion in the masses in ancient India.

(7) **Rejection of the Caste System.** Lord Buddha preached the principle of human equality and brotherhood. Since he rejected the authority of the Vedas, he also rejected the caste system based on the interpretation of their contents in Hinduism. Lord Buddha respected the merit and not the birth of a person in a particular family.

D. HINAYANISM AND MAHAYANISM

As the art of writing had not developed in India during the time of Lord Buddha, what remained with his followers after his death were the oral instructions given by him.

In later period, difference of opinion arose in the scholars of Buddhism about the interpretation of what Lord Buddha had preached.

To settle their differences and to give directions to the fol-

lowers of Buddhism, the scholars of Buddhism held meetings which were called as the "Councils of Buddhism". These councils were held in different periods the First Council in 483 B.C., the Second Council in 383 B.C. and the Third Council in 250 B.C. and the Fourth Council in about 100 A.D. in the reign of King Kanishka of the Kusha Dynasty in India.

Out of those Councils of Buddhism, the Fourth Buddhist Council is more important as it introduced structural changes in the organizational matters of Buddhism which split Buddhism into two sects or schools of thought called as the Hinayanism and Mahayanism.

(i) **The Hinayana Sect.** One sect of Buddhism was called as the Hinayana Sect or the Lesser Vehicle. It was also called as an Orthodox school of Buddhism as the followers of this school were strictly the followers of the original simple teachings of Lord Buddha. As Lord Buddha had preached, followers of Hinayana Sect were against idol worship, elaborate ceremonies and the use of Sanskrit language in religious literature.

(ii) **The Mahayana Sect.** The Second school of Buddhism, the Mahayana Sect or the Great Vehicle, was in favour of idol worship and wrote its religious literature in the Sanskrit language. The followers of this school defied Lord Buddha and preparing his idols, started their worship by conducting elaborate ceremonies. It developed its own religious literature which considered Buddha as a deity. It was different from the religious literature of Buddhism which regarded Buddha as a man.

From the time of the Fourth Buddhist Council onwards, there was a graying rivalry between Hinayana and Mahayana Schools of thought.

The Mahayana Sect was adopted by many foreign tribes like the Indo-Greeks and the Kushanas who conquered territories in India during the period of 200 B.C. to 300 A.D.

Out of their rulers, King Kanishka of the Kushana Dynasty was a great patron of Mahayana Buddhism. Because of his royal support and donation, Mahayana Sect became powerful and popular and it spread in Central Asia.

Kanishka constructed several stupas and viharas to further the interests of Buddhism and its learning.

E. SPREAD OF BUDDHISM

Lord Buddha was a great organiser. To spread Buddhism effectively, he established the organization of the Buddhist Sangha or community. It was an order (religious organisation) of Buddhist ascetics bound by strict rules of conduct and discipline.

The membership of the order was allowed to the men and women of all the caste and religions in India.

The ascetics of the Sangha organization were called as the Bhikshus and Bhikshunis whose conduct and work was governed by the strict rules prepared by Lord Buddha.

For their residence, study and religious work monastic houses called as the Viharas were established in India.

Through the work of the members of this organization, Buddhism gradually spread in all parts of the ancient India. The Indian Kings like Ashoka Maurya (273-228 B.C.), Milinda (Menander of the Indo-Greek dynasty), Kanishka (78 A.D.) became followers of Buddhism and giving their support helped the spread of Buddhism in India, Central Asia and China. Hindu King Harsha (606-648 A.D.) the rulers of the Satavahana dynasty and the Gupta dynasty were great patrons of Buddhism. With the help of those kings, Buddhism spread in Japan, Malaya, Indonesia, etc. Thus, Buddhism became an international religion.

F. EFFECTS OF BUDDHISM

(1) **Effect on Hinduism.** The humanitarian and simple teachings of Lord Buddha made an appeal even to the thinkers of Hinduism. On the basis of the essence of his teachings, they introduced following changes in the practices of Hinduism. (i) They discouraged animal sacrifices; (ii) wrote the literature of the Puranas and the Upanishads in which they communicated in an easy manner the contents of the Hindu philosophy and allowed the Shudras and the women to listen the recitation of that literature, and also gave a place of honour to Lord Buddha in Hinduism by regarding him as an incarnation [Avatara] of Lord Vishnu, who is a prominent god of Hinduism.

As a result of these matters, Hinduism became a much human religion.

(2) **Effects in other countries.** In China, Central Asia, Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia and Malaya the spread of Buddhism

made the tone of the life of the people more moral and humanitarian. People of those countries were influenced by the principle of Ahimsa (non-violence) preached in the teachings of Lord Buddha.

Thus Buddhism proved to be a moral force to make the people of different parts of the world a highly cultured people.

G. BUDDHIST ARCHITECTURE

The followers of Buddhism developed the architecture of Buddhism in ancient India. That Buddhist architecture was intended to attend the religious needs of the followers of Buddhism.

(i) **The Stupa.** The religion of Lord Buddha accepted in it much from the popular beliefs of the time. Its simple ritual was based on the cult of the **Chaityas (Sacred Spots)**. The Chaityas were generally small groves of trees or single sacred trees which were on the outskirts of villages. The Chaityas sometimes were spots where the ashes of revered monks and chiefs of the Buddhist Church were buried. Those Chaityas or Sacred Spots were easily accessible for the simple worship of the common followers of Buddhism. Those Chaityas were regarded by those followers as the abodes of earth-spirits.

After the death of the Buddha, the monks of Buddhism gave up the practice of constant travel. They settled permanently near the local chaityas of the villages or towns. As time passed, these little monasteries grew in size and importance.

From this tradition of the chaityas there developed a tradition of the **Stupas in Buddhism**.

The recipients of the portions of the ashes of Lord Buddha built Stupas over those ashes at different places in India. In the succeeding centuries, the followers of Buddhism constructed the Stupas on the remains of locally revered monks of Buddhism. As a result of these matters the Stupa had a religious sanctity in Buddhism.

Since Prince Siddhartha had achieved enlightenment and had become the Buddha (Enlightened One) under the Bodhi Tree, the followers of Buddhism planted a Pipal tree near the Stupa to commemorate the Buddha's enlightenment. By that, the Pipal tree near the Stupa became an object of great reverence in the life of the followers of Buddhism.

The followers of Buddhism after the death of Gautama Buddha,

raised him to the status of divinity and worshipped his remains and the symbol of his enlightenment. According to their religious beliefs the followers of Buddhism regarded the Stupa as a symbol of the Parinirvana of Lord Buddha and the Pipal tree as a symbol of his enlightenment.

The followers of Buddhism worshipped the Stupa by circum-ambulating it in the auspicious clockwise direction and by prostrating before it after making to it the offerings of flowers. The followers of Buddhism did this sort of a worship because they believed that Lord Buddha was the greatest of the gods.

The Stupas were constructed by the architects with the help of the bricks or stones. Its shape was of a hemispherical dome. Those domes had in them a small central chamber, in which the relics of Lord Gautama Buddha were placed in a casket.

The Stupa was crowned by an umbrella of stone or wood. The Stupa was surrounded by a wooden fence enclosing a path for the ceremonial clockwise circumambulation (Pradakshina) to revere the relics within it.

Out of the greatly beautified Stupas in ancient India, the important ones were at Bharhut and Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh and at Amaravati in the lower Krishna Valley.

The Stupa at Bharhut which was probably constructed in the second century B.C. was famous for its sculpture. The Stupa at Sanchi is regarded as one of the finest architectural remains of ancient India.

Around the big Stupas, the Buddhists constructed lesser Stupas and monastic buildings which became centres of Buddhist learning and religious activity in ancient India.

MAIN POINTS

A. CAUSES FOR THE RISE OF BUDDHISM

(i) Evil practices of the Caste System; (ii) Domination of the Brahmanas in Religion; (iii) Importance of Outward Practices in Hinduism; (iv) Religious Literature in Sanskrit.

B. PRINCE SIDDHARTHA BECOMES MAHATMA OR LORD BUDDHA

Prince Siddhartha (566-483 B.C.), the son of the king of Kapilavastu, Shuddhodana of Gautama family, tried to obtain

real knowledge about human life and its problems in the world with the help of the Yogic practices advocated by Hinduism and Jainism. As his body became restless due to severe fasting, he gave up the Yogic practices and took food. When he was sitting in meditation under a pipal tree at Gaya, he obtained the real knowledge; was called by the people as the Mahatma or Buddha—Enlightened One, that is, a man who had real knowledge. Therefore his religion came to be known as “Buddhism”.

C. TEACHINGS OF MAHATMA OR LORD GAUTAMA BUDDHA

(1) **Four Noble Truths or the Arya Satyani;** (2) **The Eightfold Path or the Middle Path;** (3) **Law of Karma and Moral Life;** (4) **No Belief in God or the Vedas;** (5) **No Animal Sacrifices and Idol Worship;** (6) **Use of the Pali Language ;** and (7) **Rejection of the Caste System.**

D. HINAYANISM AND MAHAYANISM

Since the teachings of Lord Buddha were available in verbal form, difference of opinion between his followers arose from time to time about their interpretation. To settle those differences they held their councils called as the Councils of Buddhism. Out of those Councils the Fourth Buddhist Council was important as in it, two sects or schools of thought—Hinayana and Mahayana—got developed.

(i) **The Hinayana Sects.** Followed original teachings of Buddha like—no idol worship and use of Pali language. (ii) **The Mahayana Sect.** Followed idol worship by preparing idols of Lord Buddha and used Sanskrit Language for its literature. Was adopted by foreigners who conquered lands in India during 200 B.C. to 300 A.D. Was supported by King Kanishka. It was a popular sect and it spread in Central Asia.

E. SPREAD OF BUDDHISM

Lord Buddha was a great organiser. He established the Buddhist Sanghas for the work of his religion. For the training, conduct and work of the men women ascetics of the Sanghas he gave strict rules. Indian Kings like **Ashoka** became followers of Buddhism. These kings and Hindu Kings like **Harsha** gave patronage to Buddhism. Therefore, Buddhism spread not in all India but also in the outside countries like **China, Central Asia, Indonesia, Japan, Ceylon, etc.**

F. EFFECTS OF BUDDHISM

(1) **Effects on Hinduism.** Practices of Hinduism became humane, Animal sacrifices were discouraged, Shudras and Women given facility to listen to the literature of the Puranas and Upa-Puranas. (2) **Effects in Other countries.** People of the countries where Buddhism spread became persons of high morality and cultural activity.

TEST QUESTIONS

(1) Explain the main teachings of Buddhism and assess its impact on mankind.

(2) Write notes on :

- (i) Contribution made by Kanishka to Buddhism;
- (ii) Hinayanism and Mahayanism ;
- (iii) Fourth Council of the Buddhists.

(3) Do you agree with the opinion that Mahavir Jain and Gautam Buddha introduced in Ancient Indian religion, a simple view of life, moral values and ethical practices ? Substantiate your answer. (B.U. April, 1973).

(4) What is the significance of the Stupas to the Indians ? What light do these throw on the life and religious beliefs of their builders ? (B.U. April, 1973).

OUTLINE

- A. India Before the Rise of Chandragupta Maurya—600-322 B.C.
 - B. India After the Departure of Alexander the Great.
 - C. Chandragupta Maurya (322-298 B.C.) and the Development of Government Administration.
 - D. Bindusara (298-273 B.C.)
 - E. Ashoka (273-233 B.C.)
 - F. Successors of Ashoka (233-184 B.C.)
 - G. Causes of the Downfall of the Mauryan Empire
 - H. Conditions in India During the Mauryan Age (322-184 B.C.)
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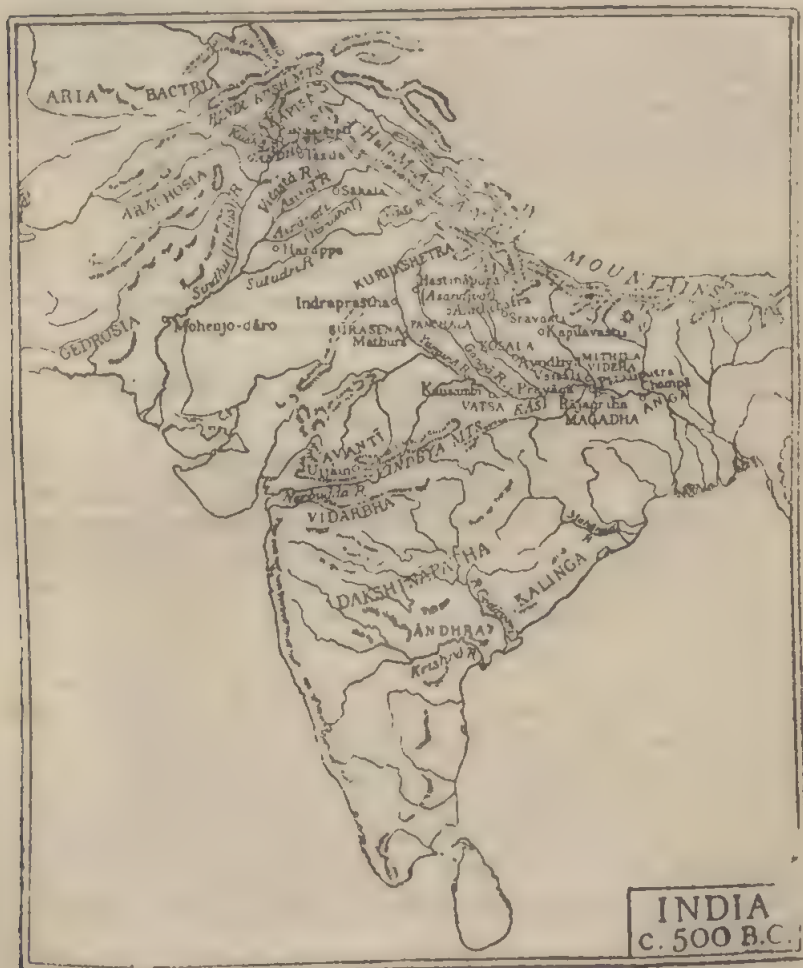
**A. INDIA BEFORE THE RISE OF CHANDRAGUPTA
MAURYA (600-322 B.C.)**

(1) **India—A Politically Disunited Country.** India was a politically disunited country before the rise of Chandragupta Maurya in 322 B.C.

By the sixth century B.C. the Indian matters in social and religious life were not healthy. Those were corrected by Lord Mahavira and Gautma Buddha who propounded respectively the new religions in ancient India, namely, Jainism and Buddhism.

Just as improvements took place in the Indian social and religious matters in the sixth century B.C., nothing was attempted by the Indian people since ancient times to give India political unity and stability. Up to the sixth century B.C., the rulers of Ancient India fought among themselves to increase their own power without caring for the achievement of national and political solidarity. This resulted into the creation of a number of political units in India under the kings and the leaders of the

republics. The result of these matters was not good on the Indian political life. For, when in the sixth and the fourth centuries B.C. Indian territories were attacked and conquered by the Persians and Greeks, the Indians failed to unite politically to defend the motherland.



(a) **The Persian Conquests In India (517-331 E.C.).** The Persian emperor Darius I (522-486 B.C.) attacked and conquered the Indian territories of Punjab up to the river Sindhu. Though the territory of Punjab was very rich and prosperous, its Indian

rulers did not try to free it from the Persian domination. That territory remained as a part of the Persian empire during 517-331 B.C. It became free during 331-327 B.C. when in 331 B.C. the Persian empire was conquered by Alexander the great of Macedonia (Greece).

(b) **The Greek Invasion of India Under Alexander the Great (327-325 B.C.).** As Alexander the great had become the master of the Persian empire, he attacked India in 327 B.C. to conquer its territories up to the Sindhu river in Punjab which once had formed a part of the Persian empire and whose people had proclaimed their independence after the fall of the Persian empire in 331 B.C.

Though Alexander the great conquered that territory and its people, the powerful rulers in India did not show a national sense to go to the rescue of those people. Bringing that territory under his control, Alexander left India in 325 B.C.

B. INDIA AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

(i) **Reasons For the Rise of the Mauryan Empire.** After the departure of Alexander the great in 325 B.C., great political changes took place in India. Alexander's invasion opened the eyes of the small kingdoms and republics and they realised that if they remained separate from each other in the cause of the defence of India, they can easily be defeated by a strong foreign military power. An urge for political unity to save India from future foreign attacks was felt powerfully in northern India. Together with this, intense disliking was created everywhere in India about Dhana Nanda, the wealthy and well equipped ruler of the Magadha empire. Instead of trying to drive out the forces of Alexander from India even though they had marched nearly to the border of Magadha, Dhana Nanda had remained inactive and rolled in luxury. People felt like replacing him by a proper and capable person who would face the problems before the country boldly.

Fortunately, during this time India got a powerful military leader of great insight and exceptional ability. He was Chandragupta, who was ably guided by Arya Chanakya, the most profound political thinker India has ever produced. This combination of the sword and the brain gave the required leadership to the

country. It placed India on a firm footing of political solidarity for about 150 years to come.

C. CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA (322-298 B.C.) AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

(1) **Early life.** About the descent or lineage of Chandragupta Maurya there is no reliable information. From the different types of evidence it appears that Chandragupta either belonged to the Kshatriya clan of the Mauriyas which was dwelling in the Himalaya region full of peacocks or a son of a Nanda ruler from his Shudra woman, Mura. It also appears that Chandragupta was military commander in the service of King Dhana Nanda of Magadha. It is probable that Chandragupta and Arya Chanakya, who was also in a responsible position in the court of Dhana, were expelled from the Magadha empire for their views against the policy of inactivity of Dhana Nanda against Alexander. Both of them seem to have worked in the north-western territory around Taxila to unite the people politically against Alexander in about 326 B.C. The people of Kandahar and the Asvaka Kingdom who were conquered by Alexander, revolted against his Greek Governors because of their intense hatred about the foreign domination, when Alexander had advanced further to conquer Indian territory up to the river Beas. Alexander was falling short of men to keep under check the people who were rebelling around him in India. At this time only, according to the Greek sources, Chandragupta saw Alexander. The purpose of his visit to Alexander is uncertain ; but it is clear that Alexander got annoyed by the boldness of Chandragupta.

After the death of Alexander in 323 B.C., the position of the Greek Satraps (Governors) and their army became very critical in India. The revolutionary patriotic movement against the foreign invasion which was going on in India since 326 B.C. became very powerful and Chandragupta appeared as its leader. He collected a band of patriotic soldiers and with the help of the patriotic people defeated the Greek Satraps of Alexander in the north-west of India and the Punjab. After this, he conquered the republican states and kingdoms in North India up to the frontiers of Magadha's empire. He attacked Magadha and after defeating the Nanda army killed Dhana Nanda to relieve India from its wicked ruler. In causing this revolution, Chandragupta

(2) **As an Emperor and Conqueror (322-298 B.C.).** Actuated by the policy of building up a strong and politically united state in India, Chandragupta brought under his power all the northern republics and kingdoms. His arms penetrated deep in the southern India up to the territory of Madura. Thus he was the first ancient Indian sovereign to have under him northern and most of the territory of southern India.



Side by side with the extension of the territory of his empire Chandragupta well organised and disciplined his army, with a view to protect India from the foreign attacks. Because of this, he successfully defeated the powerful military general of Alexander the great, Seleucus Nikator in 305 B.C. Out of the generals of Alexander, who fought civil wars to have a share of his empire after his death in 323 B.C., Seleucus became the master of Syria, Persia and Central Asia. After conquering Bactria, he attempted unsuccessfully to regain the territories which Alexander once possessed in India. Chandragupta's victory over him was so complete, that to establish peace, Seleucus not only gave territories of Herat, Kabul, Kandahar (part of Afghanistan) but his daughter also in marriage to Chandragupta. In 302 B.C. Seleucus established diplomatic relations with Chandragupta by sending his ambassador Megasthenes at his court of Pataliputra.

(3) **Sources for his Administration.** The other great achievement of Chandragupta Maurya was the establishment of a good system of government administration in India. Its merit is in this fact that it was the first well and properly laid down administration which was largely retained by the kings of different times in ancient India. The details of the administration of Chandragupta Maurya can be obtained from the two very important books of this period. The one is the '*Arthashastra*', written by **Arya Chanakya**, the chief minister of Chandragupta ; and the second one the '*Indica*', written by Megasthenes, who was the ambassador of king Seleucus Nikator of Bactria in the court of Chandragupta from 302-298 B.C.

(i) **Arthashastra of Chanakya.** The *Arthashastra* deals with the use of force, i.e., the government power, to achieve the happiness of the people in the state. Its author Arya Chanakya who is also known by other names as Kautilya and Vishnugupta, was not only a sound theoretician but was also a practical administrator. He has treated in his work various subjects which help the good administration possible. Because of his minute consideration of an efficient and sound administration, Chanakya has stated how the princes who are to be future rulers should be educated, what should be the daily routine of the king who has to govern the subjects properly and how the selection of trusted able ministers should be made. He has also expressed views on the establishment of different government departments to do various work ; their organization and working. He also discusses

the methods of properly levying and collecting the taxes and gives guidance to the king on what lines he should maintain relations with the neighbouring states to become powerful. Kautilya advises the ruler to exert always to conquer others, as otherwise, they will try to conquer him. To conquer others, he states, the king should make his neighbouring states weak by sowing seeds of disunion, employ spies and hired assassins and poison and women. By following fair or foul means the king should try to overpower others.

(ii) **Indica of Megasthenes.** The 'Indica', which was a detailed account of India written by Megasthenes, is not available in its original form. As its much use was made by many great Greek and Latin writers, we find most of its extracts in their works which are available for our study. These extracts are of great importance as they give us the reliable and connected description of India by a foreign political expert. It gives us the knowledge of the highly organised administration of Chandragupta Maurya, how it controlled the economic life and its secret service system. It tells us how Chandragupta personally administered justice in the open court. It also gives us the idea as to how he lived in great luxury in a big and beautiful palace at Pataliputra and how care was taken to protect his life from the probable attacks in those times of great political changes in India. It supplies us the information about the administration of the capital city of Pataliputra.

(4) **Development of Government Administration.** The structure of the government administration of Chandragupta Maurya was as follows :—

The head of the state and the government administration was the king himself. He was the law giver, supreme judge and the commander in chief of all the armed forces of the state. He was to use his powers to achieve the happiness of his subjects and in their happiness was to seek his own happiness.

The administration of Chandragupta was divided into different parts and their proper arrangement was laid down to bring efficiency in their work. The different parts of the administration were (i) **Civil administration** ; (ii) **Judicial administration** ; (iii) **the administration of the spy department** ; (iv) **the military administration** ; and (v) **the Municipal administration of Pataliputra.**

(i) **Civil Administration.** It was managed by the central executive or the Mantri Parishad, under the supervision of the king. The central executive had important ministers like 1. The Mantri ; 2. The Purohit ; 3. The Senapati ; 4. The Finance Minister ; 5. The minister of public works ; and 6. The Yuvaraja (the crown prince). They were the well tried and able persons appointed by the king. The king sought their advice in the important matters of administration.

Under the ministers of different departments were the administrative heads of the departments called as the Mahamantras. To carry out their orders and policy matters, under them were the officers called as the Amatyas. Under the Amatyas were the civil servants of different grades to do the work of various nature of the departments.

The central executive supervised and directed the work of its subordinate units on the basis of the policy of achieving the good of the subjects.

For the better management of the administration, Chandragupta divided his vast empire from Herat to Assam and the Himalayas to Madura into the provincial units of administration, probably on the lines of the best Persian administration of the ancient times.

The king appointed the Uparajas or Viceroys or Governors as the head of the provincial administration. They were generally persons who were either connected with the royal family or persons of great administrative ability and skill.

The governor had under him for the management of the revenue administration of the province, the officers called as the Antapalas. The other important officers under the governor were the Durgipalas, who looked after the management of forts and the military administration of the province. These officers had the required staff to carry out their orders.

The province was divided into different small districts for the better management of the administration. In the district, the officers called as the Rajukas looked after the work of land survey and agriculture. The officers who were called as the Pradeshikas, were incharge of the work of collecting revenue and maintaining peace and order in the district.

In the district, there was the administration of the group of

towns under the officers called as the *Sthanikas*. They and their subordinate staff did the work of maintaining land records, records of births and deaths, occupations of the people and the lists of the dwelling and outgoing foreigners in their areas.

In the district there was also the administration of the group of villages, under the officers called as the *Gopas*. They did the work of attending the common problems of different villages.

In the district, the administration of a town was under the officer called as the *Nagaraka*. He was assisted by his subordinate staff to carry out the work of the well being of the town dwellers. In his work, he was helped by the members of the town council, who were elected by the people of the town. The administration of every village in the district was under the *Gramani* who was either a hereditary officer of the government or an elected person by the villagers. He looked after the village administration of maintaining law and order, revenue collection and giving justice in local matters with the help of the elected or hereditary members of the village council or panchayat who belonged to different classes or castes. Thus from the village to the central executive, Chandragupta laid down a well knit government administration in India.

Besides the territory of the provinces under the direct administration of Chandragupta, the Mauryan empire included the territory of the conquered republics and kingdom. They were given self governing facilities for their internal affairs. But they were required to recognise the overlordship of the Mauryan king over them.

(ii) **Judicial Administration.** The smallest unit of the judicial administration was the court of the village Panchayat. Its elected or hereditary members of different classes or castes gave justice to the villagers in their local matters.

The people of the towns had courts to seek justice. The people of the districts and the provinces also had different courts to seek justice. Over these courts were the *Dharmastiya* (civil) and *Kantakashodhana* (criminal) courts.

The *Dharmastiya* (civil) court had three *Amatyas* who were helped by learned *Brahmanas* in their work to give justice in civil matters like property, marriage, etc.

The *Kantakashodhana* or criminal court had three *Amatyas*

to give justice in the criminal matters like murder, theft and disturbing law and order. They were helped in the work by the staff of the spy department who detected crime and reported information about the trouble-mongering people in the state.

If the person was not satisfied by the justice given by the courts at different levels, he could appeal to the king who was the highest authority in the judicial administration. We learn from the 'Indica' of Megasthenes that Chandragupta gave justice to the people in his open court. He was helped in his work by persons who were learned men in the matters of law, social practices and religion. Justice was administered on the basis of the social customs, traditions, beliefs and practices of the people. The punishments given to the law breakers were of severe nature like whipping, mutilation, etc. Capital punishment was given to offenders who had committed the offences of treason and murder.

(iii) **Administration of the Spy Department.** The necessity of the politically critical times in India led Chandragupta to establish the administration of the spy department in his empire. The foreign Greek kingdom of Bactria and other areas on the north-west border of India were under Seleucus Nikator who had unsuccessfully attacked India in 305 B.C. Trouble was expected from that side at any time. Together with this, there were people of many kingdoms and republics who were conquered by Chandragupta. They were likely to conduct activity to disturb the political solidarity of the country. To put down their crooked and unhealthy activity Chandragupta established the spy department to obtain the secret news about their work.

The members of spy department were appointed by the king and they were directly responsible to him. The staff of the spy department wandered in all the parts of the empire and supplied information to the king not only about the activity of the persons of evil character but even about his administrators and ministers. They also supplied information of the criminal offenders to the Kantakashodhana courts. Because of their work, crime did not remain hidden and the crooked activity of the traitors could be nipped in the bud; safety in the country was ensured and well-being of the people increased.

(iv) **The military administration.** Chandragupta possessed a strong well trained and disciplined army. The 'Indica' of Megasthenes gives the information about his armed troops and their

management. To establish peace and order in the empire and to protect the country from foreign attacks, Chandragupta maintained a superior army of 6,00,000 foot soldiers, 30,000 cavalry, 9,000 war elephants, and 8,00 chariots. He had also an efficient transport organization and the fleet.

We gather from the Arthashastra that the weapons of the soldiers were swords, lances, bows, arrows, javelins and bucklers. Defensive armour was supplied to soldiers, horses and elephants. Special care was taken for the training and drilling of soldiers and proper attention was given to the sick and the wounded in the army.

For the proper management of the army affairs, there was a war office. It was divided into six boards. Every board was managed by five members. These boards looked after the management of : (1) Infantry ; (2) Cavalry ; (3) Chariots ; (4) Elephants ; (5) Ships and (6) Transport department. These boards arranged for the training, organisation, discipline, medical aid, entertainment, supplies and transport needed by every war department.

The department of ships had a duty of providing and maintaining harbours, ferries and regulating water traffic. In the Arthashastra there is a mention of the sea-going vessels, both for coastal traffic and for distant voyages to Burma and China.

(v) **Municipal Administration of Pataliputra.** Megasthenes has given in the 'Indica', a detailed description of the capital city of Pataliputra and its municipal administration. He has stated that Pataliputra was situated at the confluence of the Son and the Ganges rivers. The city had a shape of a parallelogram. It was nine miles long and one and a half miles broad. It was surrounded with a ditch of 606 feet in the breadth and 45 feet in depth. The city had a wooden wall around it. It had 570 towers and 64 gates. The wall had holes to shoot arrows from inside the city on enemy who besieged it.

The palace of the king was situated at the centre of the city. It was mainly constructed of timber. The palace buildings were large and beautiful. The wooden pillars of the palace halls were plated with gold and had on them designs of birds and leaves in gold and silver. The furniture of the palace was rich and artistic. It had magnificent thrones, chairs and vessels of gold, silver, copper set with precious stones.

The capital city had a municipal administration. The muni-

cipal administration was managed by six committees. On every committee there were five commissioners to look after its work with the help of their subordinate staff.

The first committee looked after the work of industries and handicrafts of the city.

The second committee looked after the visitors and foreigners who came on business to the city and arranged for their lodging and other conveniences.

The third committee did the work of registration of births and deaths in the city. It was incharge of the work of the census of population and property.

The fourth committee regulated the sales of goods. It issued licences to merchants and inspected the use of standard weights and measures by them.

The fifth committee supervised the work of the manufacturers and prevented them from mixing old and new articles together to deceive the customer.

The sixth committee was incharge of the collection of a tax of ten per cent on sales made in the city.

The municipal administration was also incharge of the work of the maintenance of public buildings, care of the markets, harbours and temples. It also took measures to regulate the prices of the goods.

Thus the city of Pataliputra was well governed and well protected.

(5) **Sources of Revenue.** The chief source of the state revenue was the land tax. According to the Greek sources it was one-fourth of the total produce of the land. The other sources of revenue were the taxes on commerce, tolls and ferry dues. The commercial sales in cities were regulated by the state officials and they collected a tax of ten per cent on them. The state also earned income from the mines, pearl, fisheries, forests, fines and excise duties.

(6) **Government Expenditure.** The money obtained from all these sources was spent on the expenditure of the king and his court, army, administration, charities, religious donations and public works like roads, irrigation, public buildings, etc.

The government of Chandragupta took great care of agriculture which was the main occupation in India. His government

had a regular department which created irrigational facilities to promote agriculture. It constructed bigger canals, reservoirs and lakes and looked after their maintenance. Chandragupta constructed the famous Sudarshana lake at Girnar under the supervision of the provincial governor, Pushya Gupta. He gave instructions to his army not to hurt the cultivators or destroy their crops during the time of warfare.

The road department of Chandragupta's government kept roads in order. It also constructed bridges over the river to give facilities of travel to the people even during rainy days. The department provided rest houses for the travellers.

After achieving these things and great glory, it appears from the Jaina literary sources that Chandragupta abdicated his throne in favour of his son Bindusara. About the end of his life he came under Jaina influences and during the time of great famine in the north, retired to Mysore along with the Jaina monk Bhadrabahu. Chandragupta is said to have starved himself to death according to the practices of Jainism and died in 298 B.C.

(7) **Estimate of Chandragupta.** He was undoubtedly the greatest sovereign of ancient India. He had in him a unique combination of military genius and administrative skill. He was intensely patriotic and he freed India from the foreigners. He understood the needs of the country during his time and gave it the much needed political unity and solidarity. By giving the people an efficient administration he increased their happiness and prosperity. His fine arrangement of military management and government affairs gave India safety from the foreign attacks up to 184 B.C. To achieve all this good for the country and the people, he himself lived a disciplined and regulated life and sternly demanded discipline and obedience from his subjects. If he had not been stern, probably he would not have achieved the glorious things for which his name has become immortal in the pages of Indian History. He did what circumstances demanded to make India a strong nation.

D. BINDUSARA (298-273 B.C.)

Bindusara succeeded his father, Chandragupta Maurya. He is known in the Sanskrit literature by his title 'Amitraghata' (slayer of foes). This is probably because, during the early years of his reign, he was required to put down the serious rebellions of his subjects in the south India and the province of Taxila.

The disturbances in south India were of great magnitude. To put them down and to restore law and order Bindusara was required to conduct a great warfare to such an extent that it is held as if he conquered the south again.

The rebellion in the province of Taxila was brought under control by his son, prince Ashoka. The people had not rebelled against the king but against his wicked and oppressive administrators. This indicates that the central government could not establish a thorough check on the administrators of distant provinces in those days due to the lack of the means of communications. To improve the conditions, Bindusara appointed Ashoka as the **Viceroy of Taxila**.

Bindusara was in friendly relations with the Greek rulers of Syria and Egypt. On the throne of Syria, the son of Seleucus Nikator, Antiochus, ruled during this time and he sent his Greek ambassador, Daimachus, to take the place of Megasthenes in the court of Bindusara. The king of Egypt, Ptolemy Philadelphus, also sent his ambassador, Dionysius, in the court at Pataliputra.

From these things it appears that Bindusara was a strong ruler, who kept intact the empire of Chandragupta Maurya. After his death, he was succeeded by his son Ashoka in 273 B.C.

E. ASHOKA (273-233 B.C.)

(i) **Early Life.** The accession of Ashoka on the throne of Magadha in 273 B.C. and his coronation in 269 B.C. has created a great puzzle about his character. According to the different literary evidence it appears that the four years' delay in his coronation took place either because of his war of succession with his elder brother Sumana in which Sumana was killed or because of a four-year state mourning (*chauvars*) for the late king Bindusara observed as prescribed by the orthodox rites by the people of Magadha.

Before his accession to the throne, Ashoka had gained an administrative experience. As a viceroy he had successfully administered the provinces of Ujjain and Taxila. Because of this, he was well equipped with the art of governance and became a great and noble administrator of India.

(2) **War of Kalinga -- A Turning Point in the Life of Ashoka.** In about 262 B.C. he conquered the state of Kalinga, which must have probably defied the Mauryan power. The people of Kalinga

were powerful and fought bravely against the army of emperor Ashoka in the famous Kalinga war. But in the end, Ashoka became victorious after slaying 1,00,000 soldiers of the Kalinga army. As war prisoners, he captured their 1,50,000 soldiers. Because of this warfare thousands of people died in Kalinga and much property was destroyed. The horrible slaughter of men and the pains which they suffered made Ashoka to take the eventful decision of giving up warfare completely in the future. He is the first victorious emperor in the world to renounce warfare. Due to this the Kalinga war is said to be a turning point in the life of Ashoka.

After renouncing war, Ashoka decided to exert to achieve the welfare of his subjects by improving government administration and by doing works which would bestow good on them.

During this time, he was much influenced by the ethical and humanitarian principles of Buddhism. To achieve the welfare of the people concretely, he took out a two-year tour of his empire with the Buddhist monk Tissa or Upagupta, to review the conditions of life of the people. During this tour, he visited learned Brahmanas, ascetics and old people to receive instructions. He discussed with them the rules and principles of Buddhism. After the tour, he became an active follower of Buddhism and decided to guide the life of the people on the basis of the principles of Buddhism. For this reason, he inscribed his Edicts (Royal proclamations) on rocks and stone pillars in different parts of his empire. They were intended for the guidance of his subjects and administrators. Probably, the idea of issuing these Edicts might have been suggested by the inscriptions of the Persian Emperor, Darius I, who had previously ruled over Punjab in India. These edicts of Ashoka are the most valuable archaeological sources of his period. They give reliable data to trace the achievements of Ashoka.

(3) **The Edicts.** The Edicts of Ashoka were written in simple prakrit language Pali, which the common people could understand. They were also inscribed in different scripts which the people of different parts of his empire could read. Thus, the edict found at Mansehra (Hazara district in N.W.F.P.) was written in the local script called Kharoshthi, which the people in that area could read. The other edicts found in other parts of his empire are written in the Brahmi script, which the people in

those areas could read. From these edicts it is inferred that during 3rd century B.C. bulk of the people in India could read and write.

The inscriptions (Edicts) are found in almost all the parts of India from Peshawar to Nepal in the north ; to Mysore in the south ; to Dhauli in Orissa in the east and to Girnar in the west. They indicate the territory of Ashoka's empire.

(i) **Rock Edicts.** The important rock edicts of Ashoka are the following and have been found in the territory shown against them.

1. Shahbazgarhi and Mansehra—near Peshawar ; 2. Kalsi—in U.P. ; 3. Girnar—in Kathiawad ; 4. Sopara—near Bombay ; 5. Dhauli—in Orissa ; 6. Jaugada—near Madras ; 7. Bairat—near Jaipur ; 8. Sahsram—in Bengal ; 9. Maski—near Hyderabad (Deccan).

(ii) **Pillar Edicts.** The important Pillar Edicts of Ashoka are the following and have been traced in the area noted against them.

1. Rumindei—in Nepal ; 2. Sarnath—near Banaras ; 3. Lauriya Nandangadh—in Bihar ; 4. Topra—near Ambala and 5. Sanchi—near Bhopal.

Besides the rock and pillar edicts, Ashoka also issued several minor edicts which are found in different parts of India.

(4) **Humanitarian Work.** From the contents of the rock and pillar edicts, we gather the information that Ashoka abolished the slaughter of animals for sacrifices in the empire. He prevented animal fights and non-vegetarian public feasts. He also declared his policy to give up war to conquer others. As a measure of mercy Ashoka granted a reprieve of three days to the convicts sentenced to death, and instituted jail deliveries on the anniversaries of his coronation. To achieve the welfare of the sick people and the animals he provided for hospitals and gardens in which Indian and foreign medicinal plants and herbs were cultivated. He also constructed wells and planted trees for shade on the roadsides for the comforts of travellers and animals.

He asked the people of different religions to show toleration to each other. He requested the people to show respect to elders and follow pious and non-violent conduct in their relationship with each other. To show religious toleration he bestowed gifts

and donations on the Brahmanas and Nirgranthas (Jainas). He also donated cave dwellings to the Ajivakas.

(5) **Example of a Good Ruler.** To set an example to the people of good and virtuous conduct, Ashoka reformed his own life as he believed that example is better than precept. He stopped slaughter of animals in the royal kitchen except two peacocks and one antelope. He discontinued the pleasure tours of the king for hunting and other amusements. He made himself available to the people to give justice at any time.

Ashoka also took steps to improve government administration to achieve the good of the people. He ordered his officers to show toleration to the people of different religions and to serve them impartially. They were expected by the emperor to treat the subjects affectionately as they would treat their children. To see, that his administration served the people in reality, Ashoka took out tours of inspection of his empire. He ordered his officers to go on tours in the empire to check the proper working of the administration after every five years. He issued special orders for the better management of the administration of Kalinga which had suffered due to his warfare. The guiding principle of his administration was human treatment to all the living creatures.

In the administration, which he inherited from Chandragupta and Bindusara, he created a new and separate department of missionary service under officers called as the Dharma-Mahamatras. They were the ministers of religion or morals, who propagated the cause of piety among the subjects of the Mauryan empire and among the foreign peoples.

Ashoka also appointed newly, the officers called as the Stri-adhyaksha-mahamatras, to supervise the moral of women in his empire.

(6) **Ashoka's Foreign Policy.** Ashoka maintained good friendly relations with the foreign rulers by sending special envoys to their courts. The rulers of the foreign countries whom he has mentioned in his Edict are : 1. the king of Syria, Antiochos (265-246 B.C.) ; 2. King of Egypt, Ptolemy Philadelphos (285-243 B.C.) ; 3. King of Cyrene in North Africa, Mogas (285-258 B.C.) ; 4. King of Macedonia, Antigonos Gonatas (278-239 B.C.) ; 5. King of Epirus in Greece, Alexander (272-258 B.C.) ; and 6. King of Ceylon, Tissa (251 B.C.). Ashoka claims to have convinced them about his policy of renouncing war.

(7) **Ashoka's Service to Buddhism.** Ashoka exerted much to propagate the cause of Buddhism. In fact, all the measures which he had taken to improve government administration and to achieve the welfare of his subjects had behind them the consideration of humanitarianism, which was the spirit and essence of Buddhism. They created a favourable impression about Buddhism in the minds of the people, who got attracted towards it.

In that, his officers called as the Dharma Mahamatras, had a duty to impress upon the mind of the masses the principles of Buddhism. Ashoka also inscribed on rocks and stone pillars the principles of virtuous conduct of Buddhism for the understanding of the common people throughout his empire. He gave donations to the Buddhist monasteries to effect the spread of Buddhism and undertake humanitarian service in the society. He arranged for the residence and learning of the Buddhist monks by donating cave dwellings to them. In addition to these things, he sent religious missions in the different parts of his empire and to Burma, Nepal and the neighbouring Greek kingdoms to preach the principles of Buddhism and thereby effect its spread. He had sent his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitra to spread Buddhism in Ceylon.

Ashoka also took steps to purify the organization of the Buddhist Sangha to make it more effective to spread Buddhism. He held the 3rd Buddhist council at Pataliputra in 251 B.C. to consider the problem of the Sangha organization. This council took decision to expel the lazy and the false monks, who instead of doing work of the Sangha only enjoyed the material benefits bestowed by the emperor. Because of this step, the Sangha became more vigorous and its true workers spread Buddhism not only in India but also in the foreign countries.

Thus, by giving active support and help to Buddhism, Ashoka not only made Buddhism, which was a local religion, a national religion, but a world religion.

(8) **Estimate of Ashoka.** Emperor Ashoka is the noblest ruler the world has ever produced. He is a great example of a sovereign who used his vast resources and power not to rule over the people cruelly but to seek their welfare and well-being. The result of the Kalinga war showed him the miseries of human life in the world and made him feel to remove them with the help of his government power. India will always be proud about this

sovereign, who instead of feeling a brute joy about his glorious victory in war, rendered himself to the service of his subjects. Ashoka gave up fighting war to conquer others and attempted to bring in the way of the life of the people the noble humanitarian principles of Buddhism through his government administration.

He was a great ruler who practised high ideals, like the observance of ahimsa in the crooked field of Politics, not blindly but practically. Even when he announced to give up fighting war, he did not decrease his military forces or neglect the care of the defence of the country. He followed the high ideal of giving up warfare and requested the rulers of other countries to follow it. But if they were not to give up war, then Ashoka had kept India ready to face any eventuality.

He was basically a practical ruler. Because of this, he took care to see that the money he gave to the Buddhist Sangha was used in reality to achieve the welfare of the masses. He made the 3rd Buddhist council to drive out from the Sangha, the lazy and idle monks and purify its administration to do welfare work vigorously.

He was not the kind of a ruler who asked others to follow good things and himself rolled in idleness and luxury. Emperor Ashoka is respected and remembered by the Indian people, not because he was a ruler of a vast empire, but for his having set an example of ideal life to the persons in power. Ashoka did not only talk of high ideals, but himself lived a life of service, virtue and simplicity.

He was the first ruler in India who attempted to spread the principles of a religion—Buddhism—through government administration. Because of this, his administration did humanitarian work and exerted to increase the happiness of the subjects.

Ashoka is wrongly blamed for practising the Buddhist principle of Ahimsa. People feel that he made India militarily weak by giving up fighting warfare. As the facts of history are, we find that Ashoka died in 233 B.C. His dynasty came to an end in 184 B.C. after a period of nearly fifty years from his death; and for that Ashoka's policy of not fighting war does not appear to be responsible. Not only that, but we also find that the ruler of Magadha, Pushyamitra Shunga (184-149 B.C.) who had come in place of Brihadratha Maurya, defeated Demetrios, the Greek ruler of Bactria when he attacked India in the early part of the 2nd

century B.C. These historical facts clearly prove, that the high idealism of Ashoka was not of a weak ruler, but of a strong and mighty ruler who benevolently cherished the pursuit of noble ideals in actual life. Even after his death the skill of military organization and warfare had not disappeared from India. If after some time India became politically weak due to the division of Ashoka's empire, we have to blame his successors for that and not Ashoka.

F. SUCCESSORS OF ASHOKA (233-184 B.C.)

After the death of emperor Ashoka in 233 B.C. there was no able and strong ruler in the Mauryan dynasty. Because of this, there is less information available about the successors of Ashoka.

It appears from the available evidence that after the death of Ashoka, his sons divided the empire under them; and the people of Ujjain, Kalinga and Andhra, throwing the Mauryan rule over them, proclaimed independence.

Ashoka was succeeded at Pataliputra by his son Kunala. Ashoka's another son, Jaluka, established an independent kingdom in Kashmir and Gandhara. He was a follower of Shaivism, a sect of Hinduism.

Kunala ruled over the kingdom of Pataliputra from 232-224 B.C. He was succeeded by king Dasaratha (224-216 B.C.). After him the ruler of Pataliputra was Samprati (206-207 B.C.). We do not have historical information of rulers after him except Brihadratha, the last ruler of the Mauryan dynasty. Brihadratha ruled over the kingdom of Pataliputra during 191-184 B.C. He was a weak ruler and while reviewing his army, he was killed by his commander-in-chief Pushyamitra Shunga in 184 B.C. Thus ended the powerful and glorious Mauryan dynasty in a tragic way.

G. CAUSES OF THE DOWNFALL OF THE MAURYAN EMPIRE

(1) **Lack of the Sense of Political Unity.** The chief cause of the downfall of the Mauryan dynasty was the lack of sense of political unity in the Indians. Even through the mighty sovereign Chandragupta Maurya had built up a vast empire with insight to protect India from the foreign attacks, others do not seem to have understood its essence.

(2) **Empire based on Force and not on Consent.** The conquered parts of the Mauryan Empire often attempted to become

independent of it, whenever they found an opportunity. It was probably because they did not like the Mauryan authority which was imposed on them by conquest. The ancient politicians did not evolve a pattern of state which was made up of the people who would have agreed to remain together willingly and by choice to achieve common ends. The agreement based on force naturally disappeared with the disappearance of force.

(3) **Personal Ambition of Princes and Officials.** Another important cause was the pursuit of personal ambition, to become rulers, by the royal princes and subordinate officials. As the creation and maintenance of the empire in ancient times depended upon the vigour and energy of the ruler, the weak successors of Ashoka proved incapable to preserve his empire.

H. CONDITIONS IN INDIA DURING THE MAURYAN AGE : 322-184 B.C.

(1) **Political Conditions.** India experienced conditions of a golden period in its political matters during the Mauryan period (322-184 B.C.). During this period, India was completely free from foreign political domination. The Greeks who had been in India since the time of the invasion of Alexander as political masters were driven out completely by Chandragupta Maurya. He made India a politically united and strong country after conquering different kingdoms and republics in the northern and southern India.

Chandragupta not only brought for the first time in India its northern and southern parts under one rule but created for the first time in India a scientifically managed government administration. In laying down the foundations of a strong, capable and efficient administration, Chandragupta was guided by the most profound political thinker of this period, Arya Chanakya. On the basis of his minute consideration of doing every thing properly and efficiently, the details of the Mauryan administration were prepared. This administration, which had separate departments to attend different works of the government, gave the required peace, prosperity, law, order and protection to the country. The rulers of the Mauryan administration were strict as was the demand of the times. During this period, the Indians showed spirit to learn better things from the Persians in administration and in the military matters from the Greeks.

Chandragupta also reformed his army on the lines of the Greeks. Because of this, he defeated the seasoned commander of Alexander, Seleucus Nikator, king of Bactria in 305 B.C. and saved India from foreign domination.

During this period only, the government under Chandragupta and Ashoka exerted to achieve the welfare of the people by constructing rest houses, wells, roads, dams, tanks and hospitals for men and animals. Great care was taken of the subjects and they were treated with toleration. The people of the conquered kingdoms were allowed freedom in their internal affairs.

India was held in great honour by the people of the foreign countries, as the Mauryan kings developed friendly relations by sending embassies in the court of their rulers. King Ashoka, who had declared a policy of giving up war, tried to impress upon the rulers of foreign countries to follow that policy. As a result of this, the international prestige of India increased during this period. After the death of Ashoka, his sons, instead of supporting each other to preserve the political unity, established their own kingdoms after causing division of the great empire of Ashoka. This ruined the ideals for which the empire was founded. Subordinate official like commander-in-chief Pushyamitra Shunga killed his master, king Brihadratha, to become himself a ruler of Magadha. The spirit of such insubordination proved ruinous to the cause of political unity and continuance of the Mauryan dynasty. In fact, in those ancient days of the lack of the means of communications, it was not possible for the central sovereign to keep a complete check on the administrators of distant provinces. The central sovereign had mainly to depend for good administration on the loyalty and attachment of his officers, who were generally insubordinate and rebellious in spirit. They caused harassment of the subjects under them as is seen from the revolt of the people of Taxila against the crooked administrators, during the time of emperor Bindusara. Because of the harassment of the Mauryan administrators, the people under them must have naturally felt like freeing themselves from the Mauryan rule.

(1) **Social Conditions.** People of different religions lived in toleration in the Indian society during this period.

The joint family system prevailed. The people followed the caste system rigidly. The people of Hinduism lived a life on the

lines of the Varna and Ashrama arrangement. Women had a honourable place in the household. People seem to know reading and writing of languages as is clear from the issue of Ashoka's edicts in all the parts of his empire.

There were numerous inns, eating houses and sarais for the convenience of the traders and foreigners. There were also gambling houses where people found entertainment. The government provided amphitheatres for the occasion of dramatic, boxing and other contests of men and animals.

In the settlement of the property matters the practice of adoption, sanctioned by the king, was followed. A person who did not have male child from his wife was allowed to marry other wives of any caste. But he was required to render justice to all. The widow also had a liberty to marry again.

The king took care of the poor and helpless old, and the members of the families of workmen and soldiers who died during their employment under him.

In the society, were the ganikas of public women who were the king's servants. Offences against women of all nature were severely punished by the government.

There existed human slavery in the society. But the slaves were given humane treatment and could become free after seeking their master's favour or by paying required money to the master.

Under the good administration of the Mauryas, the society experienced conditions of peace, safety and prosperity.

(3) **Economic Conditions.** Agriculture was the main profession of the people in India. The government took great care to promote agriculture by rendering facilities of irrigation like the Sudarshana Dam in Kathiawad. The agriculturists were given state aid during the period of famine and to carry out schemes of improvements. It appears from the Greek sources and the Arthashastra that the farmers were paying $\frac{1}{6}$ of the total produce as a land tax to the government.

Realising the importance of the agricultural production for the well-being of the people, Chandragupta Maurya asked his soldiers not to destroy crops or injure the cultivators even in the enemy territory, during the time of warfare.

The agriculturists experienced prosperity, as their raw mate-

rial was required in large quantities by different industries which manufactured goods for a busy trade which was specially fostered by the Mauryan kings.

A great advance of Indian industries took place under the Mauryas because of India's vast agricultural and mineral resources. Metals like gold, silver, copper, and iron were available in large quantities. In that, the Indian craftsmen possessed extraordinary skill in different industries.

The cotton textile industries of the territories of Madura, Kasi, Vanga and Vasta produced best cotton fabrics. They also produced linen fabrics (khoma); coloured and silk and woollen cloth of different variety. This indicates the technical perfection achieved by the textile industry during the Mauryan period.

The industries of woodwork, ivory and stone cutting produced articles in large quantities for the use of the rich people in India. The other busy industries were, the leather, jewellery, pottery, ornament and metal. They produced articles of great workmanship for the foreign markets.

The inland and foreign trade of India during Mauryan days was vigorous and prosperous. The traders conducted a great trading activity all over India under the safety of the Mauryan administration. Seaborne trade was conducted by the Indian Merchants in the countries like Burma, Malaya, and Ceylon. By land routes the Indian merchants traded in Bactria, Central Asia, Persia and Mesopotamia. The Mauryan administration offered facilities of trade by maintaining the road system in good condition. The Indians exported blankets, skins, horses, conch-shells, diamonds, pearls, jewels, gold, textiles of Bengal, Banaras, Assam and fragrant wood of Assam and the Himalayan region. The foreign trade was more during this period as the Mauryan sovereigns had pursued a policy of friendship with the rulers of Greece, Egypt, Syria, Bactria and Ceylon.

The Mauryan government took care to protect the consumer from cheating by the merchants and the traders. A strict watch was kept by the government for the use of standard measures and weights. The offenders were given severe punishments.

Along with this, the government also protected the artisans, craftsmen and merchants. For the theft of their articles, the government gave severe punishments to the thieves and robbers.

The Mauryan sovereigns issued punch marked coins of silver and copper. They have been found in all the parts of India. It indicates their use as currency during this period.

(4) **Religious Conditions.** The Mauryan kings gave religious toleration to the people of all the religions. Even when king Ashoka propagated the cause of Buddhism through the government administration, he had taken care to make his administrators treat all the people equally and with toleration. Even though Chandragupta was a follower of Jainism and Ashoka the follower of Buddhism, they gave gifts and donations to the learned men of Hinduism and the Ajivaka sect.

Because of Ashoka's support, Buddhism spread not only in all the parts of India but in other countries like Burma, Ceylon and Nepal also. (See under the head "Ashoka's service to Buddhism".)

In spite of the fact that Buddhism had royal support and had become a popular religion, majority of the people were the followers of Hinduism in all the parts of India. The Hindus worshipped different gods like the Shiva, Kubera, Skanda, Vishnu and Laxmi. The feelings of the Hindus were probably injured by Ashoka's prohibition of animal sacrifices which were followed by them since Vedic times.

Jainism was popular in the parts of Bihar, Orissa and south India. The Mauryan kings Chandragupta and Samprati were the followers of Jainism.

Under the Mauryas the people of different religions lived together in mutual goodwill and toleration in the Indian society.

(5) **Mauryan Art.** From the 'Indica' of Megasthenes we get the idea about the construction of wall around the city of Pataliputra and the palace of Chandragupta Maurya. (See under "Municipal administration of Pataliputra".) The reign of Ashoka was an important period in the development of the arts of building and sculpture in India.

Ashoka was a great builder. He constructed many stupas, pillars, caves and residential buildings.

The stupas were constructed of brick or stone in the shape of a hemispherical dome. The stupa was constructed to deposit a relic of Lord Buddha or of a great Buddhist saint. Because of this the stupa has a religious sanctity.

The stone pillars set up by emperor Ashoka are very beautiful and prove the highest skill of the sculptor of that age. They are nicely polished and finished. The pillars have two parts, the shaft and the capital. The capitals are carved with beautiful animal and other figures. The workmanship of these capitals, especially of the Sarnath pillar, is of highest skill and has received Universal praise. The animal figures on them are life-like and their carving is without smallest fault.



"Inscribed Ashoka Pillar, Lauriya-Nandangarh"

These pillars are heavy in weight and each weighs up to fifty tons. Their transport and erection in different parts of India testifies the advanced engineering knowledge of the people during this period.

The practice of building the caves was started by king Ashoka in India. The caves were cut out of solid rock. Its work needed patient skill and tremendous labour. The caves were used for different purposes like the residences for monks, churches, and assembly halls. Many of the caves constructed by Ashoka have been found in the Barabar Hills near Gaya.

It appears that Ashoka had enlarged the palace which was constructed by Chandragupta, by constructing additional buildings around it. The buildings were made beautiful by artistic carving and inlaid sculpture work.

Thus under the Mauryan kings the people of India enjoyed an era of peace, prosperity and an all-round development.

I. ART OF WRITING IN ANCIENT INDIA

The people of the Indus Valley civilization had a script. Though it seems to have been partly deciphered, its complete knowledge is not as yet available. [See – Ch. 5, **J. Art of Writing and the Seals of the Sindhu Civilization**]. After the fall of the Indus Valley civilization in 2750 B.C., to the middle of the third century B.C. we do not have concrete evidence of the art of writing practised by the Indians except, some of the references to their art of writing in the Vedic literature and the Pali scriptures. In the middle of the third century B.C. we have the concrete evidence of the art of writing practised by the ancient Indian people. That evidence is of the inscriptions of Emperor Ashoka (273-233 B.C.) of the Mauryan dynasty. His inscriptions are engraved in the **Brahmi** and the **Kharosthi** scripts.

(1) **The Brahmi Script.** The Brahmi is the most important script of the inscriptions of Ashoka. It was used by him in his inscriptions which are found in different parts of India except the North-Western territory of India. In the areas of the North-West he used the Kharosthi script for his inscriptions.

The Brahmi script is normally used for writing and reading from left to right. There is no conclusive evidence available as yet about the origin of this script. Though some scholars regard that the Brahmi script was derived from the script of the Indus

Valley civilization the others hold that it got derived from some North Semitic scripts.

Though about the origin of the Brahmi script nothing is very clear, it is accepted by all the scholars that it was skilfully adopted to the sounds of the Indian languages. From that it is felt that in some parts of that script there is an Indian contribution. It is felt by the scholars that the Indian development of the Brahmi script is the work of the Brahmanas or other learned men who knew the Vedic science of Phonetics.

(a) **Development of the Devanagari and Other Scripts in India.** Variations of the Brahmi script got developed in ancient India during the time of Emperor Ashoka (273-233 B.C.) itself. In the succeeding centuries, these differences developed more and that led to the development and evolution of distinct alphabets. Some time earlier to 1st century B.C. the Indians began to add little ticks (called in Western printing terminology Serifs) to the letter. They also added flourishes of various kinds to those letters. When this tendency of theirs increased, by the close of the Mediaeval period, the serifs at the top of letters were joined by them in an almost continuous line. That formed the **Nagari alphabet ("City Alphabet")** whose script came to be called as the **Devanagari Script** (the "**Script of the City of the Gods**"). In the Devanagari script are written at the present day the Indian languages like, the Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi, etc. When in the Devanagari script local variations took place, there took place the development of the individual scripts in Bengal, Gujarat, Punjab, Orissa, etc. in India.

(2) **The Kharosthi Script.** The Kharosthi script in which Emperor Ashoka's inscriptions are found in the North-West of India, is derived from the Aramaic alphabet. The people of Armenia (a small country in Asia Minor) learnt the art of writing from the Phoenicians and developed their Aramaic script for writing. The Persians who used the Mesopotemian cuneiform for their inscriptions, used the Aramaic alphabetic script for their documents after learning it from the people of Armenia. It was through the Persians that the Indians of the North-Western India learnt the Aramaic alphabetic script in about the fifth century B.C. From the Aramaic alphabetic script, those Indians developed the Kharosthi script which like the Aramaic is read from right to left. Many of the Kharosthi letters closely resemble the Aramaic alphabets.

Kharosthi was adapted to the sounds of Indian languages when the Indians invented new letters and the use of vowel marks which were lacking in the Aramaic script.

Kharosthi script was used in India by the ancient Indians upto the 3rd century A.D.

MAIN POINTS

A. INDIA BEFORE THE RISE OF CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA (600-322 B.C.)

India—A Politically Disunited Country. (a) The Persian conquests in India (547-331 B.C.); (b) The Greek Invasion of India under Alexander the great (327-325 B.C.).

B. INDIA AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

(i) Reasons for the Rise of the Mauryan Empire.

Indians conquered by Alexander realized the bad effects of their political disunity and desired to make India a strong and united country.

C. CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA (322-298 B.C.)

(1) Early Life : No reliable information available. (2) As an Emperor and Conqueror (322-298 B.C.) : Conquered all Northern India and territory up to Madura in South India. Defeated Seleucus Nikator. (3) Sources for his Administration : (i) Arthashastra of Chanakya ; (ii) Indica of Megasthenes. (4) Development of Government Administration : (i) Civil Administration ; (ii), Judicial Administration ; (iii) Administration of the Spy Department ; (iv) Military Administration ; (v) Municipal Administration of Pataliputra. (5) Sources of Revenue. (6) Government Expenditure. (7) Estimate of Chandragupta Maurya : Freed India from the foreign domination. Founded centralized, efficient and strong administration. Greatest king of Ancient India.

D. BINDUSARA (298-273 B.C.)

Title 'Amitraghata' (Slayer of foes). Contact with Greeks.

E. ASHOKA (273-233 B.C.)

(1) Early Life. (2) War of Kalinga—A Turning point in the life of Ashoka. Renounced warfare. Decided to use political

power for the good of the subjects. (3) **The Edicts** : (i) **Rock Edicts** ; (ii) **Pillar Edicts**. Give details of his work and Administration. (4) **Humanitarian Work**. (5) **Example of a Good Ruler**. (6) **Ashoka's Foreign Policy**. (7) **Ashoka's Service of Buddhism**. (8) **Estimate of Ashoka**. Humanitarian King. Set an example of a Good Ruler. Followed 'Ahimsa' but did not make India militarily weak.

F. SUCCESSORS OF ASHOKA (233-184 B.C.)

Weak. Divided Ashoka's Empire into smaller kingdoms. Last ruler, **Brihadratha Maurya**, killed by his commander, **Pushyamitra Shunga**.

G. CAUSES OF THE DOWNFALL OF THE MAURYAN EMPIRE

(1) **Lack of the sense of Political Unity**. (2) **Empire based on Force and not on Consent**. (3) **Personal ambition of Princes and Officials**.

H. CONDITIONS IN INDIA DURING THE MAURYAN AGE (322-184 B.C.)

(1) **Political conditions**. India strong, free and well governed. (2) **Social conditions**—Harmony in the Society. (3) **Economic conditions**—People prosperous due to vigorous inland and foreign trade. (4) **Religious Conditions**—Government tolerant. Relations of all religions cordial. (5) **Mauryan Art**.

I. ART OF WRITING IN ANCIENT INDIA.

(1) **The Brahmi Script** ; (a) **Development of the Devanagari and Other Scripts In India**. (2) **The Kharosthi Script**.

TEST QUESTIONS

(1) Form an estimate of Chandragupta Maurya as a conqueror and administrator.

(2) What were the steps adopted by Ashoka to promote the cause of dharma ?

(3) Can Ashoka be called an ideal King ? Give reasons for your answer.

(4) Form an estimate of the career and achievements of Ashoka Maurya.

(5) Give a brief account of Mauryan administration and point out its merits and defects.

(6) Write Short Notes on the following :—

- (i) Arthashastra ;
- (ii) Megasthenes ;
- (iii) Mauryan Art ;
- (iv) Civil Administration of the Mauryas ;
- (v) Kautilya ;
- (vi) Administration of the city of Pataliputra.

(7) Give reasons for the rise of the Mauryan empire and mention the salient features of that government. (B.U. April, 1973).

OUTLINE

- A. India—From the Fall of the Mauryas to the Rise of the Guptas.
- B. Samudra Gupta (335-375 A.D.) and Chandra Gupta II (375-415 A.D.)
- C. Administration of the Guptas (300-500 A.D.)
- D. Literature, Art and Science in the Gupta Age
- E. Hinduism in the Gupta Age

A. INDIA—FROM THE FALL OF THE MAURYAS
TO THE RISE OF THE GUPTAS

The fall of the Mauryan dynasty in India took place in 184 B.C. After that event, up to 300 A.D. there did not emerge any powerful kingdom, which could give political unity to India on the lines on which the Mauryan sovereigns had given earlier.

During 184 B.C.-300 A.D. there existed in India the rule of the **Shunga** and the **Kanva** dynasties in Northern India. Those dynasties failed to give the desired political unity to India. The **Satavahana** dynasty of the Deccan also proved to be unsuccessful to unite India politically even though in it had emerged, from time to time, kings of great merit and ability.

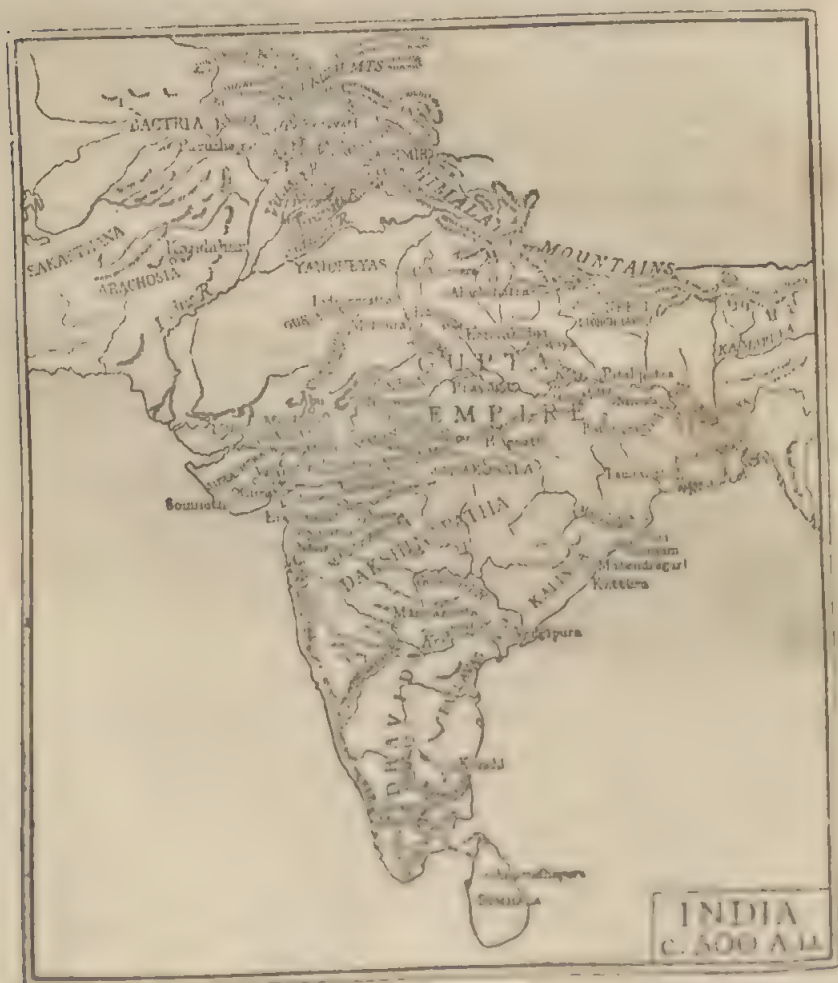
During 184 B.C.-300 A.D., political instability increased more when the Central Asian tribes of the **Yavanas**, **Shakas**, **Parthians** and **Kushanas** attacked India and conquered its different parts. The leaders of those tribes became settled kings in India and constantly fought wars with the kings of the Indian dynasties. As a result of this, India experienced conditions of political chaos.

The chaotic political conditions in India came to an end because of the work of the kings of the Gupta dynasty, which was founded by **Sri Gupta** in 300 A.D. in North India.

B. SAMUDRA GUPTA (335-375 A.D.) AND CHANDRA GUPTA II (375-415 A.D.)

Out of the kings of the Gupta dynasty which ruled in India during 300-500 A.D., King Samudra Gupta and Chandra Gupta II are the most important.

(1) **Samudra Gupta (335-375 A.D.).** Samudra Gupta succeeded his father, Chandra Gupta I, who had laid the foundations of the Gupta empire in North India by bringing under his power the territories of Magadha, Ayodhya, Oudh and Tirhut.



On this foundation, Samudra Gupta, who was a talented military general, built up a superfine structure of the Gupta empire.

To put an end to the atmosphere of political disunity in India, Samudra Gupta undertook an activity of bringing largest possible Indian territories under his power. To accomplish that ideal, he undertook military campaigns in North and South India. By defeating the kings of the **Naga dynasty**, Samudra Gupta conquered the regions of Mathura, Rohilkhand and Gwalior. Similarly, after crossing the Vindhya mountains with great difficulties, he brought under him the different kings of South India. He also subjugated tribes of the Himalayan region and the forests of Assam. Thus, in a period of 40 years of his reign, Samudra Gupta, by incessant military exertions, gave India the much needed political stability.

He gave India a tolerant and efficient rule. As he himself was an instrumentalist, he understood the need to develop finer arts like music and gave patronage to the artists in India. After his death in 375 A.D. he was succeeded by his son Chandra Gupta II.

(2) **Chandra Gupta II (375-415 A.D.)**. Chandra Gupta II was the most prosperous sovereign of the Gupta dynasty. He increased the territories of the Gupta empire by bringing under his power the prosperous regions of Gujarat and Malwa. The conquest of Gujarat offered a facility of ports to the traders of the Gupta empire to conduct sea-borne trade with the countries like Persia, Egypt and parts of the Roman empire.

He was a great patron of arts and learning. Therefore in his reign the Gupta empire was at its peak of the creative activity in the matters of arts, sciences and literature.

As Chandra Gupta II was a benevolent and tolerant ruler, his subjects of different religions were happy under his government. He died in 415 A.D. leaving for his successors a well-organized state and the government.

(3) **Successors of Chandra Gupta II (415-500 A.D.)**. During the reign of the successors of Chandra Gupta II, **Kumara Gupta** (415-455 A.D.) and **Skanda Gupta** (455-468 A.D.), the Gupta empire was attacked by the barbarian Huna tribes of Central Asia. Against their shattering attacks, though **Kumara Gupta** and **Skanda Gupta** could largely defend the Gupta empire, since their

successors were weak kings, by 600 A.D. finally the Gupta empire crumbled.

C. ADMINISTRATION OF THE GUPTAS (300-500 A.D.)

The Gupta kings largely continued the methods and the organisational structure of the government which was given in the earlier period to India by Chandragupta Maurya.

The Gupta government was a monarchical form of government. The head of that government was the Gupta king.

To manage the matters of his government efficiently and with wisdom, the Gupta king appointed a **Council of Ministers** which was known as the **Mantri Parishad**.

The **Prime Minister**, who was also called the **Mantrimukhya**, acted as the leader of the ministers who were in the **Mantri Parishad**. They together gave advice to the king whenever he sought for it. The advice of the ministers was not binding upon the king. The king could always act and take decisions according to his own wishes and in discretion.

To carry out the work of the varied nature of the Empire, the Gupta government had the Revenue department, Finance department, Courts of Justice, Spy department, Police department etc. These departments functioned efficiently as their work was supervised by the king himself.

The area of the Gupta empire was divided into different parts for the convenience of the management of the administration. The kingdoms which were conquered by the Gupta kings, were allowed to be ruled by their respective kings if those kings paid regular tribute to the Gupta sovereign. People of those kingdoms were allowed to follow freely their own course of life.

The area of the Gupta kingdom was divided into different administrative units. There existed the **Provinces** which had the units of administration called as the **Districts**. The Districts had in them the units of the City and the Village administration.

On all those units of administration, the Gupta kings appointed efficient administrators.

The Gupta rulers felt that they were the custodians of the welfare and happiness of their subjects. Therefore, they made their government work orderly and efficiently. The kings of the Gupta dynasty took care to give proper justice to their subjects.

The Gupta kings were tolerant rulers. Emperor Samudra Gupta, though he himself was a Hindu, allowed a facility to **Meghavarman** of Ceylon to construct a Buddhist monastery at Bodha Gaya in India. The great Buddhist scholar **Vasubandhu** enjoyed patronage in his court. Similarly, the successors of Samudra Gupta were also tolerant rulers. The most notable amongst them was **Chandra Gupta II** (375-415 A.D.). His tolerant spirit and the efficient administration is praised by the Chinese pilgrim, **Fa Hien**, who visited India during 401-411 A.D. In his account of travel in India, he has stated that the people of India who belonged to different religions lived peacefully under a benevolent administration of the Indian king.

The taxation measures of the Gupta administration were rational. While carrying out its duty to give protection, law and order to its subjects, the Gupta government encouraged arts, literature and science. This encouraged the talented persons who developed greatly the matters of their skill during the Gupta period in India.

D. LITERATURE, ART AND SCIENCE IN THE GUPTA AGE

As due to political stability, maintenance of law and order and increase in the foreign trade and commerce, the people of India enjoyed peace and prosperity under the Gupta government, the persons of skill and talent could apply their mind to further the interests of literature, arts and science in the Gupta age.

(1) **Literature.** (a) **Sanskrit.** As Sanskrit was an official language in the court of most of the Indian kings in the Gupta age, it became the most respected language. In it poets, dramatists, story writers and learned religious men wrote valuable literature. Out of that vast literature, the important most are the **Shakuntala** of **Kalidasa** ; and the **Panchatantra**.

(i) **Kalidasa's Shakuntala.** Kalidasa was the greatest dramatist and poet in the Sanskrit language in the Gupta age. He wrote the works of poetry : **Raghuvamsha**, **Ritu Samhara** and **Meghaduta**, which are of rich imagination, poetic skill and of the great merit. He also wrote the dramas : the **Malavikagnimitra**, **Vikramorvashiyam** and **Shakuntala**. Out of his dramas, the **Shakuntala** is regarded as the best by the scholars all over the world.

(a) **Story of Shakuntala.** The story of **Shakuntala** is of the

days of legend, "when gods and men were not so far apart as they later became."

King Dushyanta of the Puru dynasty, who was young, brave and handsome, had once undertaken a hunting tour. In that tour, when he was chasing a deer the in forest, he reached to the hermitage of sage Kanva. At that time, sage Kanva who had gone to a outside place, was not at home. But the king met Shakuntala, the foster-daughter of sage Kanva. At the time when Dushyanta met her, Shakuntala was harassed by a bee. Dushyanta freed Shakuntala from the attentions of the bee. After getting acquainted with Shakuntala, Dushyanta fell in love with her. With due modesty, Shakuntala also indicated that she had similar sentiments towards Dushyanta.

Though king Dushyanta was in the throes of love, he could not press his suit in the absence of Shakuntala's foster-father, sage Kanva. But as he finally wanted to settle the matters about his love towards Shakuntala, he postponed his decision to go back to his capital city and stayed in the neighbourhood of Kanva's hermitage on the pretext to defend it from wild elephants and demons.

Like king Dushyanta, Shakuntala was also languid and sick with love. She confessed her feelings to her two mates in the hermitage, Anasuya and Priyamvada. Those girls persuaded Shakuntala to write a letter to the king. As she was writing that letter, king Dushyanta, who had heard every thing from a nearby thicket, came to Shakuntala and offering her a ring got married with her according to the custom of the Gandharva marriage [a type of a marriage which was by the consent of the two parties—a man and a woman who of their own wanted to marry each other].

When for some days Dushyanta and Shakuntala had lived a happy married life, Dushyanta was recalled to his capital by affairs of State. As sage Kanva had not still returned to the hermitage it was painful for Dushyanta to leave Shakuntala alone in the hermitage. But as it was essential for him to attend the State matters, promising Shakuntala that he would take her to his capital as soon as sage Kanva returns to her hermitage, he took her leave.

In the absence of Dushyanta, Shakuntala felt lonely in the

hermitage of sage Kanva. One day, when she was brooding over the matters which had taken place between herself and king Dushyanta, sage Durvasa happened to come to the hermitage of Kanva. When he called out Shakuntala, she did not give any reply to him because being absorbed completely in the thoughts about Dushyanta, she had not heard him. Sage Durvasa felt insulted due to this and he cursed her saying that "She will be forgotten by her husband (Dushyanta) until he sees the ring he gave her."

Due to the curse of the angry sage Durvasa, when Shakuntala was spending the days in sadness, sage Kanva returned to his hermitage. As a result of his spiritual powers, he knew already what had happened. He, therefore, decided to send the now pregnant Shakuntala to king Dushyanta, who was in the capital city.

While bidding farewell to Shakuntala, sage Kanva's heart was struck by sorrow as well as joy. He felt sorrow for the separation of Shakuntala from him because in future he was to miss the affection with which she took his care and looked after his almost all the matters. She had become a part of his life. The idea of living without her pained his heart very much. But being a rational and wise man, Kanva knew the truth that "one's daughter is required to be given to the other person in marriage and then, she is to be sent by the father to the house of her husband". Kanva also felt joy and happiness on that occasion. It was because, Shakuntala, to whom he had brought to his hermitage as a forsaken illegitimate child of the nymph (Apsara of Heaven) Menaka and sage Vishwamitra, was being bid farewell by him after when he had given her proper training in the matters of the house-hold, morality and virtue. His joy knew no bounds when he saw that the orphan child Shakuntala brought up to maturity under his care, proved worthy in merit to become the queen of the famous king Dushyanta. Therefore, after telling her to follow strictly the ideals of the Indian womanhood ; i.e., "the wife, under all circumstances should share the joy and sorrow of the husband ; she should be obedient to the elders and affectionate to the younger persons of his family ; she should look after the work of the house of her husband properly ; she should in no circumstance waver from the path of virtue, morality and chastity." etc., bid farewell to Shakuntala.

Then Shakuntala and the two hermits and an hermit-woman, Gautami, who were given as a company by Kanva to Shakuntala, set out for the capital of king Dushyanta.

Reaching the capital city, Shakuntala and her accompanying persons saw king Dushyanta in his court. There, she reminded the king about their love. The persons who had accompanied Shakuntala also supported her words. But king Dushyanta did not recognize her, as due to the curse of sage Durvasa had got effaced all memory of her from his mind. When Dushyanta asked her to say something that will convince him that she was his wife, Shakuntala thought of showing him the ring which he had presented to her at the time of their marriage. But when she fumbled with her fingers for the ring, she found that it had slipped off somewhere. Therefore, when after trying in vain to convince Dushyanta by different matters and arguments that Shakuntala was his wife; Shakuntala and the Persons accompanying her had become angry; the Chief priest intervened in the matter. Feeling that Shakuntala might be honest in what she said, he advised king Dushyanta to allow her to remain in his (Chief Priest's) house until the child was born to her. King Dushyanta agreed to this.

When the Chief Priest was leading Shakuntala to his home, nymph Menaka (the mother of Shakuntala) appeared and carried Shakuntala up to heaven. Menaka took Shakuntala to her true parent's home for her confinement.

Sometime after the disappearance of Shakuntala, a fisherman, with the fish he had caught, was brought by the policeman in the court of king Dushyanta. The fisherman had found a precious ring in the maw of that fish. But the policeman did not believe this and brought the fisherman before king Dushyanta under the suspicion of having stolen it. As soon as Dushyanta saw the ring, his memory returned. He remembered that he had presented the very ring to Shakuntala at the time of his marriage with her. Dushyanta, then was struck with grief as he felt that he had lost his wife (Shakuntala) and had no heir.

When the life of Dushyanta had become full of grief, he received a message from Indra, the chief God, soliciting his help in the long war between gods and demons. Dushyanta participated in that war of several years and became victorious in it. As he was returning to his kingdom, he halted at the hermitage of the divine sage Maricha. There he saw a small boy who was nobly

wrestling with a tame lion cub. Dushyanta admired the child's courage and strength. When he inquired about that boy, he came to know that he was **Bharata**, the son of Shakuntala. That made king Dushyanta and Shakuntala come together once again and live happily.

By narrating the story of the king Dushyanta and Shakuntala, Kalidasa has presented a picture of the mysterious human life in the world. The human feelings of love, agony and affection have been presented by him in a tender but masterly skill. He has pointed out in the drama that though at times persons suffer in the world by mishaps, ultimately they become happy if they are sincere, honest and firm in their resolve to follow virtuous course of conduct.

The contents and their skilful presentation in the Shakuntala prove that "both as poet and dramatist, Kalidasa was one of the great men of the world."

(ii) **The Panchatantra**. It is regarded that the Sanskrit book **Panchatantra** ("Five Treatises") was written in 500 A.D. In it exist fables which are intended to transmit knowledge of proper conduct especially to the kings and the statesmen. The fables in it are narrated in a lucid and clear style and their reading leaves a permanent impression on mind of the values of human life they have stressed.

The **Panchatantra** is a text book of "**the Wise Conduct of Life**". In its stories important lessons of sound, rational and wise conduct are given. For example, it states in one of its stories that—

"Caress a rascal as you will,
He was and is a rascal still :
All slave and sweating-treatments fail
To take the kink from doggy's tail."

In its other excellent story, the Panchatantra tells that one must be ever conscious of the past because it offers material for wisdom. A person should not make the past as an object of brooding regret.

"For lost and dead and past
The Wise have no laments :
Between the Wise and Fools
Is just this difference."

The Panchatantra was a very popular work in ancient India. When the people of the Arabian civilization learnt about it, they got it translated in the Arabic language and gave its knowledge to the people of Europe. Because of its merit in the matters of the narration of the fables, it became a most popular book in the ancient world.

(iii) **Other Works and Authors.** In addition to the above literary masterpieces, there were other literary works which made a rich contribution to the Sanskrit literature.

In the stock of Sanskrit literature, the dramas **Mrichchakatika** (The Toy cart of Clay) of dramatist **Shudraka** ; and the **Mudra Rakshasa** of dramatist **Vishakhadatta** were of great merit and skill.

In the branch of Sanskrit poetry, poet **Bharavi** wrote the epic, **Kiratarjuniya** ; poet **Bhatti** wrote the **Ravana Vadha** or the **Bhatti Kavya** in which rules of Sanskrit grammar have been illustrated ; poet **Bhartruhari** wrote the **Shatakas** on **Niti** (policy), **Sringara** (Romance) and **Vairagya** (Renunciation).

The great Smriti writers **Yajnavalkya**, **Narada**, **Katyayana** and **Brihaspati** wrote their Smritis to guide on proper lines the course of human conduct in the Gupta age.

Along with the work on policy, the **Nitisara** by the political thinker **Kamandaka**, different authors wrote the religious literature of the **Puranas** and the **Upapuranas** to give knowledge of religious matters of Hinduism to the people.

As this vast literature was written by several authors in the Sanskrit language in the Gupta age, that age is called as the **Golden Age of Sanskrit Literature**.

(b) **Pali.** Along with the literature in the Sanskrit language, different authors wrote literature in the Pali language in the Gupta age. The most outstanding work in the Pali language which was written in the Gupta age was that of the **Jatakas** or the **Jataka Stories**.

(i) **Jatakas or the Jataka Stories (500 A.D.)** The **Jatakas** are a large collection of folk-tales and other stories adapted to Buddhist purposes and incorporated in the Pali canon. Its folk-tales and stories impart knowledge in the Buddhist ethical teaching. They teach shrewdness and caution in different matters of life. They also teach the practice of generosity and virtue in life.

These stories guided the course of virtuous and moral conduct of the followers of Buddhism in ancient India.

In the 547 Jataka stories written by different authors, it is shown as to how by observing higher values and principles in life, the **Bodhisatva** (a person who acquires knowledge by doing work of human welfare) reaches to the stage of the Buddha (a person of real and full knowledge).

In these Jataka stories it is visualized that Lord Gautama Buddha was in his previous births, a Bodhisatva. By practising charity ; nobility of character ; meditation (thinking about what is good and bad) ; truth ; forgiveness ; firm resolve and works of human welfare, the Bodhisatva of those stories transformed himself in to Lord Gautama Buddha.

The Jataka story writers have set before the followers of Buddhism, an example of the good conduct of Lord Gautama Buddha when he was a Bodhisatva.

It was expected by the authors of those stories that the followers of Buddhism would emulate the example of the conduct of the Bodhisatva and by that they will get transformed into persons of real knowledge like Lord Gautama Buddha.

These stories were written in simple language and had become very popular in ancient India.

The Jataka stories depict the religious ideas and beliefs which the Buddhists had developed in ancient India. Even though Lord Gautama Buddha had told his followers that he was one like them and therefore he should not be worshipped like a God ; the followers of Buddhism, after his death, regarded him as the greatest of gods. They therefore evolved many ideas about him and on the basis of those, tried to follow virtuous and moral course of life.

(2) **Art.** In the Gupta age, the art of sculpture and painting attained a pinnacle of glory.

(i) **Sculpture.** The sculptors of the Gupta age prepared fine statues of copper. Out of those statues the statue of Lord Buddha whose height is 80 feet and which is at Nalanda in Bihar is of excellent artistic skill. Another copper statue of the Buddha is from Sultanganj and it is of 7½ feet in height. In both these statues the sculptors have shown with great artistic skill the expressions of compassion, piety and love on the face of Lord

Buddha. The images of Lord Shiva which were prepared by the sculptors of the Gupta age were also of great artistic skill.

(ii) **Painting.** In the art of painting, the painters of the Gupta age had acquired highest artistic skill. The specimens of their art of painting are found in the celebrated Ajanta caves in Maharashtra. The study of those pieces of painting shows that the painters of Gupta age had developed highest degree of skill in the matters of fresco painting.



Royal Bath from Ajanta Cave.

(3) **Science.** As a result of the political stability and prosperity of the Gupta period its scientists applied mind to develop different sciences.

(a) **Mathematics.** The science of Mathematics was developed by the famous Mathematician **Aryabhatta** of the Gupta age. He decided the place value of the nine numbers and gave his discovery of "zero" to the world. As a result of the invention of the "zero" it became possible to conduct the calculation of the large number of figures easily and quickly.

Aryabhatta also laid down the foundations of Algebra and made many new observations in geometry.

Varahamihira (499-587 A.D.) was another great mathematician of the Gupta period who by his rich contributions furthered the interests of that science.

(b) **Medicine.** The science of medicine was greatly developed by the scholars of the Gupta period. Outstanding in merit out of them was **Vagabhatta** who wrote the **Ashtanga-Sangraha** ; and **Palakapaya** who wrote the **Hastayurveda**. In these works they discussed the causes of the occurrence of different diseases and suggested medicines for their cure.

The science of Surgery was also developed by the scientists of the Gupta age. The surgeons of the Gupta period performed skilfully complicated types of operations.

(c) **Astronomy.** In the branch of the science of Astronomy, the great scientist of the Gupta age, **Aryabhatta** explained the causes of the eclipses. He also stated that (i) the earth was a sphere ; (ii) the earth rotated on its own axis ; and (iii) the eclipses are not caused because of the evil work of Rahu, but were caused by the shadow of the earth falling on the moon. Thus **Aryabhatta** was a pioneer in the science of Astronomy in ancient India.

Another great astronomer of the Gupta age, **Varahamihira** wrote the valuable astronomical works, **Pancha-Siddhantas**, **Romaka**, **Paulisa** etc., which advanced the Indian knowledge in the science of astronomy.

E. HINDUISM IN THE GUPTA AGE

As a result of the philosophy of Brahmanism stated in the Upanishads and the simple and moral teachings of Lord Mahavira and Lord Buddha, the attention of the religious thinkers of India

got focussed on the evil practices of the caste system and animal sacrifices followed by the Old Hinduism or the later Vedic Religion. The principle of **Ahimsa** or **Non-injury** which was stated in the philosophy of the Upanishads and the teachings of Mahavira and Buddha made a powerful appeal to the humanitarian sentiments of the thinkers of Old Hinduism. Feeling disgust about the evil practices of Old Hinduism, they undertook an activity to reform it. Because of their activity the Old Hinduism or the later Vedic religion got transformed into the New Hinduism in the Gupta age.

According to the practices of New Hinduism, its followers were not to perform animal sacrifices. They were to perform simple ceremonies and rituals to worship gods. The followers of Hinduism were to treat others with honour and affection. They were not to practice falsehood. They were also not to harm the animals. They were forbidden to drink wine.

To make the knowledge of Hindu philosophy available to all its members, the Hindu writers wrote in the Gupta age the literature of the **Puranas** and the **Upa Puranas**. They also added many stories in the Ramayana and Mahabharata to teach morals to the follower of Hinduism in an interesting and easy way. They also gave the facility of listening to the texts of the Puranas and the epics to the women and the Shudras. This was in contrast to the practice of the later Vedic religion which forbade the Shudras and the women to study or to listen the religious texts.

Thus in the Gupta age Old Hinduism got transformed into the New Hinduism which was of noble and humane spirit.

MAIN POINTS

A. INDIA—FROM THE FALL OF THE MAURYAS TO THE RISE OF THE GUPTAS

After the fall of the Mauryan dynasty in 184 B.C., in India prevailed an atmosphere of political disunity and disorder up to 300 A.D. Political stability got established in India after the rise of the Gupta dynasty in 300 A.D.

B. SAMUDRA GUPTA (335-375 A.D.) AND CHANDRA GUPTA II (375-415 A.D.)

The following are the most important kings of the Gupta dynasty. (1) **Samudra Gupta** (335-375 A.D.), by his military

conquests, brought large territories of India under his rule. Gave political stability to India. (2) **Chandra Gupta II (375-415 A.D.)**. Was a patron of literature, arts and learning. (3) Successors of Chandra Gupta II (415-500 A.D.).

C. ADMINISTRATION OF THE GUPTAS (300-500 A.D.)

Gupta administration was tolerant and gave political stability to India.

D. LITERATURE, ART AND SCIENCE IN THE GUPTA AGE

- (1) Literature. (a) Sanskrit. (i) Kalidasa's *Shakuntala*. (a) Story of *Shakuntala*. (ii) *The Panchatantra*; (iii) Other Works and Authors. (b) Pali. (i) *Jatakas* or the *Jataka Stories*. (2) Art. (i) Sculpture; (ii) Painting. (3) Science. (a) Mathematics; (b) Medicine; and (c) Astronomy.

E. HINDUISM IN THE GUPTA AGE

Rise of New Hinduism of humanitarian practices took place in the Gupta age.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Write notes on :—
 - (i) Samudra Gupta;
 - (ii) Science in the Gupta age;
 - (iii) Kalidasa's *Shakuntala*;
 - (iv) *Jatakas*.
 2. Describe in brief the system of medicine in the Gupta period. (B. U. April, 1973)
 3. How far do the *Jatakas* depict the life of the Buddhists in India. (B. U. April, 1973).
 4. What forms of literature did the ancient Indians develop? (B. U. April, 1973).
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OUTLINE

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A. NORTH INDIA FROM THE FALL OF THE GUPTAS TO THE RISE OF HARSHA VARDHANA

After the fall of the Gupta empire in about 600 A.D., conditions of confusion existed in North India upto 1000 A.D. in the political and cultural matters of the Indian civilization. This was mainly because of the Huna raids which caused severe destruction of human life and property. Taking advantage of the confused political conditions caused in North India due to the wars fought by the Huna leaders Toramana and Mihirakula against the later Gupta kings, some of the capable leaders and different provincial administrators of the Gupta kings founded their own kingdoms. Out of such kingdoms, the kingdom of Thaneshwar of the Vardhana dynasty rose to eminence under its famous king Harsha Vardhana.

Harsha Vardhana was the younger son of King Prabhakara Vardhana of the kingdom of Thaneshwar in North India. In the later years of the 6th century A.D., Prabhakara Vardhana defeated the Huna people in the Punjab. He made the kings in Rajasthan, Malwa accept his political suzerainty. When the territory of the kingdom of Thaneshwar was attacked by the Hunas in 605 A.D., King Prabhakara Vardhana deputed his eldest son, Rayera Vardhana, to fight against them. Prince Rayera Vardhana defeated the Hunas.

and became the king of Thaneshwar after the death of Prabhakar Vardhana who died in 605 A.D. But Rajya Vardhana was not destined to rule for a long time. When his sister Rajyashri was imprisoned and her husband Grahavarman, the king of Kanauj, was killed by Devagupta, the ruler of Malwa, Rajya Vardhana got entangled in a warfare against Devagupta. He defeated Devagupta and put him to death. Meanwhile, Rajyashri had managed to escape from the prison of Devagupta. But Rajya Vardhana lost his life due to the foul play of King Shashanka of Bengal, who was a friend of Devagupta. This created political confusion in the kingdoms of Thaneshwar and Kanauj and brought to the throne of Thaneshwar, Harsha Vardhana, the younger brother of Rajya Vardhana.

B. CIVILIZATION UNDER HARSHA VARDHANA (606-647 A.D.)

At the time when Harsha Vardhana became the king of Thaneshwar, he was a boy of merely sixteen years in age. The circumstances in which he became the king were so dangerous and grave that those would have dispirited even an experienced and mature statesman. But instead of getting bewildered by the ghastly circumstances, Harsha rose to the occasion and with unflinching courage faced the challenge before him, successfully.

(1) **Harsha's Conquests and Empire.** As soon as Harsha became the king of Thaneshwar, he marched out with his army to defeat his enemies and to effect the search of his sister, Rajyashri, who had in 605 A.D. managed to escape from the custody of Devagupta of Malwa. After getting a clue about the going of Rajyashri in the Vindhya mountains, Harsha went to that region. With great efforts, he succeeded in tracing Rajyashri, who was about to put an end to her life in disgust by entering into a fire. Harsha consoled Rajyashri and brought her back to her kingdom of Kanauj. At the request of the ministers of the kingdom of Kanauj, Harsha occupied its vacant throne. He then staying with his sister Rajyashri, made Kanauj as the capital city of his empire.

After resolving the problem of the Kingdom of Kanauj, Harsha Vardhana undertook the activity of bringing the entire Northern India under his rule, during 606-612 A.D. With the help of his vast army of five thousand elephants, twenty thousand cavalry and fifty thousand infantry, Harsha brought under his control all the Northern Kingdoms barring those of the Punjab, Kashmir and Sindh.

But in 620 A.D., when Harsha tried to bring the territory of the Deccan under him, he was defeated by the most powerful ruler of that land, **Pulkeshin II** of the Chalukya dynasty of Badami (Vatapi). Thereafter, Harsha concentrated his attention on the administrative and cultural matters and gave India an era of peace, prosperity, liberty, progress and religious harmony.

(2) **Government Under Harsha.** Harsha Vardhana, the King, was the head of the government. He had a Council of Ministers to assist him in the administration and to give him advice in the government policy and other matters. The Primeminister was of the most important position in the Council of Ministers.

For a better management of his administration, Harsha had divided his kingdom into different parts called as the **Bhukti**. The **Bhuktis** were divided into different parts called as the **Vishaya**. The smallest unit of the administration was the **Grama** (village) and it was the last unit of the **Vishaya**.

The incharge of the **Grama** administration was the **Akshapatalik**. To assist him in the administrative matters, there was another officer, called as the **Karnik**.

The **Karnik** used to maintain the records pertaining to the lands in the village. The **Akshapatalik** was to look after the work of the collection of the land revenue of the village lands. He was also required to maintain law and order in the village and by acting as a judge he was required to settle petty disputes of its inhabitants.

The bigger unit of the administration above the village, was the **Vishaya**. Its incharge was called as the **Vishayapati**.

The incharge of the administration of the **Bhukti** was called as the **Mandaleshwar** or the **Rashtrapati**.

To maintain law and order in the kingdom, there was an officer known as the **Chorodddharanik**. The entire **Police Department** was under his control.

The officer, who was called as the **Dandanayak**, inquired into the crimes of the culprits and awarded punishments to them. The incharge of the administration of the **Prison** was the **Dandapashik**. He executed the punishments awarded by the Judges to the culprits.

For the better handling of the tasks of different nature, there were in the administration of Harsha, additional officers like the Messengers, Ambassadors **Mahadandanayak**, **Mahapratihari**, **Pramata** (the officer who took the measurements of the lands), etc.

Since Harsha was a diligent sovereign, who considered that his happiness lay in the happiness of his subjects ; he used to go on inspection tours in the different parts of his kingdom. He undertook these tours to find out whether his administrators were carrying out properly the tasks delegated to them or not. In these tours he also gave an opportunity to his subjects to see him and to report about their grievances. Harsha, then, took speedy steps to attend to the needs of the people. As a result of the keen interest taken by Harsha in the working of his administration, the life of the subjects became happy.

(3) **Harsha's Patronage to Education and Learning.** As Harsha Vardhana himself was a scholar in the Sanskrit language and had written famous dramas like **Ratnavali**, **Nagananda** and **Priyadarshika**, he gave patronage to education and learning in his empire and furthered their interests.

(i) **Education.** In the age of Harsha, the Indian students took education in the **Ashramas** which were of different learned men (Rishis). The **Viharas** were the centres of learning where instructions to the students were imparted by the Buddhist monks. In the age of Harsh, the greatest centre of learning was the **University of Nalanda**.

(a) **University of Nalanda.** The Buddhist monastery of Nalanda in Bihar, which was founded in the Gupta period, developed into a renowned University by the time of the age of Harsha Vardhana.

In the Nalanda University, students of different religions were admitted. Before admitting a student in that University, his strict oral examination was taken.

Along with the subjects related to Buddhism, the students of that University were given instructions in the Vedas, Hindu Philosophy, Logic, Grammar and Medicine. Learned teachers who were specialists in their subjects, imparted instructions to the students.

During the period of Harsha, in the Nalanda University, free training for about ten thousand students was given. The famous and learned Buddhist Scholar, **Shilabhadra**, was the head of that University. To defray the expenses of the Nalanda University, Harsha himself had given to it, vast donations from time to time. For that purpose, many rich persons had also given donations to it. A permanent income of one hundred villages was granted to it.

As a result of the financial stability enjoyed by the Nalanda University, it could afford to arrange free lodging and boarding

facilities to its teachers and students. Because of the devoted work of its teachers and the students in the various branches of human learning, Nalanda University, had acquired a world-wide fame in the ancient age.

(ii) **Learning.** Harsha gave patronage to the scholars and admired their learning. Out of such scholars, the most important was his Court-Poet, **Bana**.

(a) **Poet Bana.** The **Harshacharita** and the **Kadambari** are the two works of poet Bana which he wrote while enjoying the patronage of Emperor Harsha.

The **Harshacharita** of Bana is regarded as an excellent biography in the Sanskrit literature. In his work, **Kadambari**, Bana has skilfully told the story of Vasavadatta and the prince she loved, **Kandarpaketu**.

Bana is the first prominent Sanskrit writer, who in his works, showed implicit sympathy with the poor and humble in the society.

(4) **Harsha's Religious Activities.** Emperor Harsha was deeply interested in the matters of religion. He enjoyed the company of the Scholars of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. In order to get known the mission and significance of different religions, Harsha called the Scholars of Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism together in the religious assemblies. Out of such assemblies, the assembly of Kanauj held in 643 A.D. and the assembly of Prayag held in the same year were of great importance.

In the Kanauj assembly, Harsha offered the Chairmanship to **Hiuen Tsang**, the Chinese Buddhist traveller, who visited India during 629 to 645 A.D., even though he was a foreigner. This shows the impartial spirit of emperor Harsha, who himself was a follower of Hinduism.

In the Kanauj and Prayag assemblies, thousands of Scholars of different religions belonging to all the parts of India had come together to discuss religious matters. In these assemblies, Harsha gave large amounts of money to the learned participants.

After setting a glorious example of religious impartiality, spirit of tolerance and patronage to learning, emperor Harsha died in 647 A.D.

(5) **Political Breakdown in the North after Harsha.** Emperor Harsha died in 647 A.D. without a male heir to succeed him. After his death, his empire got disintegrated. On its ruins got established small kingdoms in North India under different leaders and rulers of different dynasties.

The kingdoms which flourished in North India during the period 647—1000 A.D. were : the kingdom of Kanauj ; the kingdom of Magadha, and the kingdoms in Kashmir, Assam, Bengal, Rajputana (Mewar), Kalinga, Tripuri, Bundelkhand, Malwa, Anhilwada (Rajputana), etc. Out of these the kingdom of Kanauj tried to revive the glory and interests of the Indian civilization and culture upto 1000 A.D.

C. CIVILIZATION UNDER THE RULERS OF KANAUJ (725-1000 A.D.)

The history of the Kingdom of Kanauj during the period from the death of Harsha to the rise of its illustrious ruler, **Yashovarman** in 725 A.D., is not known because of the lack of the literature sources.

(1) **Yashovarman. (725-752 A.D.).** It seems that the kingdom of Kanauj, which experienced the conditions of political confusion after the death of Harsha Vardhana, was brought under control by King **Yashovarman**, whose ancestry is not known upto now. By his political and cultural achievements, **Yashovarman** brought the Kingdom of Kanauj to the fore front in North India.

(a) **Yashovarman's Conquest.** **Yashovarman** was a great military commander. He defeated the kingdom of Magadha and brought it under his power. He undertook many campaigns and conquered Bengal. By these achievements, **Yashovarman** became a paramount sovereign in North India after Harsha Vardhan.

(b) **Yashovarman's Patronage to Literature and Learning.** **Yashovarman** was a remarkable ruler, who, after emperor Harsha Vardhana revived again the tradition of learning and culture at Kanauj. Under him, Kanauj became a centre of high intellectual activity.

Yashovarman maintained a rich court at Kanauj. In that court, his court poet, **Vakpati** and the famous Sanskrit dramatist **Bhavabhuti** enjoyed royal patronage.

(i) **Poet Vakpati.** He was a poet of great skill in the Sanskrit language. His merit led him to become the Court Poet of King **Yashovarman**.

Poet **Vakpati** wrote his famous long poem, **Gaudavadha (The Slaying of the King of Bengal)** to describe the military victories of **Yashovarman** in Bengal.

(ii) **Dramatist Bhavabhuti.** **Bhavabhuti**, is considered as a second only to the great Sanskrit dramatist, **Kalidasa**. He wrote

the dramas—**Malati-Madhava**, **Mahaviracharita** (The Deeds of the Great Hero), and **Uttara Ramacharita** (The Later Deeds of Rama).

In the drama **Malati-Madhava**, Bhavabhuti has presented a love story which is full of incident of an exciting type in which the heroine is rescued from critical circumstances. In his other dramas, **Mahaviracharita** and **Uttara Ramacharita**, Bhavabhuti has told the story of Lord Rama. While narrating the pathetic, terrible and sorrowful events in these dramas, dramatist Bhavabhuti has surpassed other Sanskrit dramatists.

(iii) **Kumarila Bhatta and the Revival of Vedic Studies.** During the period of King Yashovarman of Kanauj, the great Hindu philosopher, **Kumarila Bhatta**, revived the studies in the Vedas. He was a prominent exponent of the **Mimamsa** school of Hindu system of philosophy.

The **Mimamsa** (Enquiry) School's original purpose was to explain the contents of the Vedas. It maintains that the Vedas are eternal, self-existent and wholly authoritative. Since its scholars tried to defend the authenticity of the Vedas against their critics—the Jainas and the Buddhists—there developed logic in the **Mimamsa** school.

Due to the efforts of the earlier philosophers and **Kumarila Bhatta**, there developed in the **Mimamsa** School, a full philosophy of Salvation. According to it, respect for the Vedas and the observance of their rules were essential first steps to attain Salvation.

The work of **Kumarila Bhatta** laid down the foundations of the work of the revival of Hinduism done by **Shankaracharya** in the 9th century A.D. in India.

(c) **Kanauj after Yashovarman.** King Yashovarman who had restored the glory to Kanauj, died in his war against **Lalitaditya**, King of Kashmir, in 752 A.D. After his death, to the rise of the **Gurjara Pratihara Dynasty** on the throne of Kanauj in 816 A.D., political confusion prevailed in North India. The strong rulers of that dynasty brought in North India, an era of political and cultural glory during the period 816-1036 A.D.

(1) **King Mihira Bhoja (836-885 A.D.).** He was a powerful ruler. He established his political power in Rajputana and Bundelkhanda, after conquering those territories. **Mihira Bhoja** subdued the people of the region near the Himalayas and extended his political authority. He also conquered Central India (**Madhyadesha**).

This political glory, King Mihira Bhoja could achieve because of his strong military.

Mihira Bhoja's military strength, especially the effectiveness of his well-trained and efficient cavalry in the battle-field, is testified by the Account of India written by an Arabian traveller, **Sulaiman** in 851 A.D. Sulaiman points out that the main bulwork of India to check the onward march of the Arabian power in India through Sindh, which was conquered by the Muslims of the Arabian civilization in 712 A.D., was king Mihira Bhoja of Kanauj.

After the death of Mihira Bhoja, his son, Mahendrapala became the ruler of Kanauj in 885 A.D.

(2) **King Mahendrapala I (885-910 A.D.)**. He increased the territories of the Kanauj empire, which he had inherited from his father, Mihira Bhoja. He conquered North Bengal and Saurashtra.

(i) **Patronage to Literature**. Mahendrapala I was a great patron of the men of letters. His court was adorned by his court-poet, **Rajashekhara**.

Poet and Dramatist, Rajashekhara. Rajashekhara was a skilled dramatist after Kalidasa in ancient India. He skilfully used the technique of the drama within the drama to make the story of the drama more effective. His famous works are : (i) **Karpuramanjari**, (ii) **Bala Ramayana**, (iii) **Bala Bharata**, and (iv) **Kavyamimansa**.

After reviving learning of Kanauj, Mahendrapala died in 910 A.D.

(3) **Other Kings of Kanauj**. After king Mahendrapala I, his son, **Mahipala** (912-944 A.D.) continued the orderly conditions of life in the kingdom of Kanauj. About this, and the military strength of Mahipala the mention is made in the Account of India written by **Al Masudi**, an Arabian traveller who visited the Indus Valley in 914-916 A.D.

After king Mahipala, the rulers of Kanauj were weak. Taking advantage of their weakness, different Rajput leaders established independent kingdoms in North India by breaking away from the empire of Kanauj.

Eventhough the kingdom of Kanauj had become politically weak, its king **Rajyapala**, gave military help to **Jayapala**, the king of Lahore, when Jayapala was attacked by **Sultan Sabaktagin** of **Gazni** in 991 A.D. In 1008 A.D. Rajyapala again gave help to **Anandapala**, the son of Jayapala, when **Sultan Mahmud of Gazni** invaded India. Sultan Mahmud took an adverse view about this

and attacked Rajyapala in 1018 A.D. As a result of this when Rajyapala fled from Kanauj, Gauda, the Chandella chief, put him to death, and brought on the throne of Kanauj, **Trilochanapala**, the son of Rajyapala. Mahmud of Gazni defeated Trilochanapala in 1019 A.D. After that event, the other rulers of Kanauj ruled somehow on that kingdom, when finally Kanauj lost its independence in 1036 A.D.

D. ADVANCE OF THE ARABIAN CIVILIZATION IN SINDH (712 A. D.)

(1) **Arabian Conquest of Sindh by Muhammad Bin Kasim.** The kingdom of Sindh, whose early history is not much known, was ruled by King **Dahir**, when Sindh was attacked by **Muhammad Bin Kasim** in 712 A.D.

Muhammad Bin Kasim, who was deputed by Khalifa Walid, the ruler of the Arabian empire, to conquer Sindh, defeated and killed King Dahir in a battle and annexed Sindh to the Arabian empire in 712 A.D.

When Muhammad was settling the matters of the Arabian administration in Sindh, the Khalifa recalled him and due to some misunderstanding, put Muhammad to death.

After Muhammad Bin Kasim, Junaid became the Arabian Governor of Sindh.

(2) **Junaid.** He, being an energetic military commander, extended the sway of the Arabian political power in Malwa and Broach through Rajaputana. But the advance of the Muslim power was checked in North India by the kings of the Gurjara Pratihara dynasty of Kanauj and in the Deccan, by the rulers of the Chalukya dynasty.

(3) **Arabian Efforts to extend Muslim Power Foiled.** After Junaid, other Arabian Governors could not extend the Muslim power in other parts of India because of the sturdy opposition offered to them by the Hindu rulers.

Taking advantage of the decline of the Arabian Khilafat at Baghdad, the Muslim governors of Multan and Brahmanabad partitioned Sindh in between themselves in 871 A.D. This caused weakness in the military strength of the Arabs in Sindh. The Arabian power of the Muslims also became weak in Sindh as a result of the stoppage of military help of men and resources to the governors of Sindh by the Khilafat of Baghdad which had declined after 871 A.D. This led to the decline of the Arabian Muslim power in Sindh by 1000 A.D.

(4) **Effects of the Arabian Muslim Rule in Sindh.** The planting of the Arabian Muslim rule produced political and cultural efforts on India.

(a) **Political Effects.** (i) Sindh became a Province of the Arabian Empire ; (ii) The Arabian Muslim soldiers got settled down permanently in Sindh ; (iii) They threatened the political power of the politically disunited Hindu Kingdoms which were near Sindh ; and (iv) The Arabian Muslim government introduced its measures like the **Jiziya Tax** upon its subjects who did not become followers of Islam. This was a new type of tax which was never introduced by the ancient Indian governments of the Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina tolerant rulers.

(b) **Cultural Effects.** (i) The Arabian Muslims, because of their conquest of Sindh, came in close contact with the ancient Indian civilization and culture. They learnt from the Indians the philosophy of their religions, medicine, mathematics, etc. (ii) The ancient Indians also learnt from the Arabian Muslims, the science of astronomy, medicine, Philosophy, architecture, mathematics, painting, etc. (iii) Since the Arabian empire had its territories extended from Sindh in India to Spain in Europe ; in those areas, through the agency of the Arabian traders and scholars, the knowledge of the Sanskrit works like the **Panchatantra** got transmitted.

E. CIVILIZATION IN NORTH INDIA AT THE TIME OF THE INVASION OF MAHAMUD OF GAZNI IN 1000 A.D.

(1) **Rise of Small Kingdoms During 944-1000 A.D.** After the death of King **Mahipala** of the Gurjara Pratihara dynasty of Kanauj in 944 A.D., the empire of Kanauj got disintegrated. During 944-1000 A.D. arose on its ruins, small independent kingdoms under different powerful leaders in North India. Out of such kingdoms, the kingdom of the Chalukyas in Gujarat, the kingdom of the Parmars in Malwa the kingdom of the Chandellas in Bundelkhand (the valley of the river Yamuna and Narmada), the kingdom of the Guhilots (Sisodiyas) in Rajaputana (Mewar), the kingdom Kalchuri under the Chedis, and the kingdom of Lahore under the rulers of the Shahi dynasty, were important. These kingdoms were politically disunited at the time when Sultan **Mahamud of Gazni** attacked India in 1000 A.D.

2. **Kingdom of Gazni Before Mahamud of Gazni.** In the reign of **Abdul Malik**, the Turkish ruler of the kingdom of Bukhara, his slave, **Alaptgin**, acted as a governor of the Province,

Khorasan in 956 A.D. After the death of Abdul Malik in 962 A.D., when a war of succession tormented Bukhara, Alaptgin founded his own kingdom at Gazni. When Alaptgin died, his slave, **Sabaktagin**, became the King of Gazni.

Sabaktagin extended the territory of the kingdom of Gazni upto the border of the Hindu kingdom of Lahore in India. The kingdom of Lahore was ruled at that time by King **Jayapala** of the **Shahi** dynasty.

When Sabaktagin tried to conquer the territory of the kingdom of Lahore, he came in conflict with its ruler, Jayapala. In the war of 986-987 A.D., Jayapala was defeated by Sabaktagin.

The victory against Jayapala led Sabaktagin to bring under him the territory upto the Sindhu river. To administer that territory, Sabaktagin appointed his governor at Peshawar. This brought the Khyber pass under the Muslims and created for them a facility to enter in India and to conquer its territories easily.

Sabaktagin died in 997 A.D. and was succeeded by his son **Mahamud**.

(3) **Sultan Mahamud of Gazni (997-1030 A.D.).** Sultan Mahamud of Gazni was a brave commander. He was one of the greatest figures in the history of Central Asia.

(i) **His Invasions.** He invaded India for seventeen times during 999-1030 A.D. His aim to invade India was to effect in it the spread of Islam and to obtain a loot from its rich inhabitants.

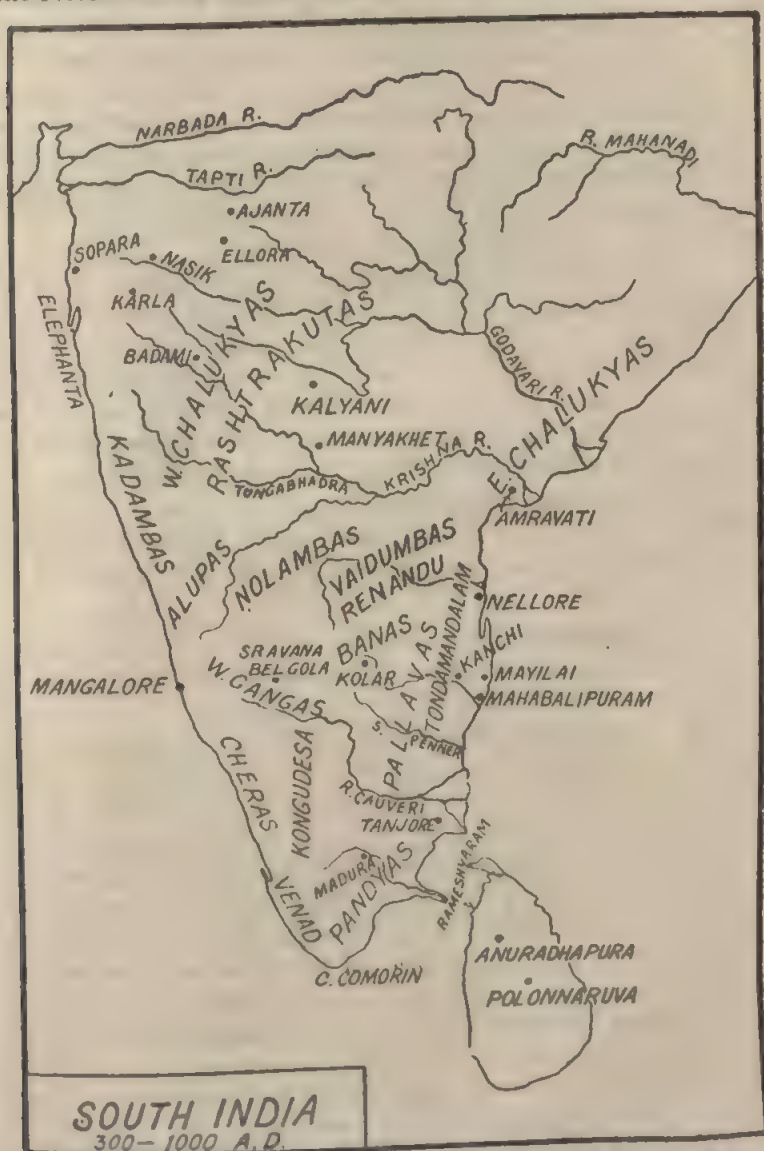
In his invasions, Mahamud of Gazni destroyed the idols of the Hindu gods after pulling down their temples. Due to it he is known as Mahamud, the "**Idol Breaker**".

In a well-organized manner, Mahamud of Gazni invaded India for the first time in 1001 A.D. He defeated Jayapala, the ruler of Lahore. After looting the prosperous city of Bhatinda, Mahamud, with enormous wealth returned to Gazni.

The subsequent sixteen invasions of Mahamud in India were directed against the rulers of different kingdoms in North India. The defeat of those rulers by Mahamud continuously upto 1030 A.D. amply exhibited the military weakness of the Indians. Due to those invasions, the fabric of an organised political life got shattered in North India. As a result of this it became easy for subsequent Muslim military leaders to establish their political power in India.

F. CIVILIZATION IN THE DECCAN (500-1000 A.D.)

(1) History of the Deccan upto 500 A.D. The territory of India, which is between the Southern bank of river Narmada and the Northern bank of river Krishna is known as the Deccan.



This territory which came in contact with the Aryan civilization in the Seventh Century B.C. was under the Mauryan rulers

till the death of emperor Ashoka in 233 B.C.

After that, there arose in the Deccan, the Satavahana dynasty. Under it, the Deccan experienced conditions of tolerant rule. The Satavahana rulers like Satkarni I (first century B.C.), Gautamiputra Satkarni (106-128 A.D.) and Yajnasri Satkarni (173-202 A.D.), tried to bring political stability in the Deccan. King Hala (first century A.D.) of that dynasty, promoted the Old Marathi language and himself wrote the work, *Saptashataka* or *Gatha Saptashati*, in it. But the rule of the Satavahana dynasty came to an end by 300 A.D. as under its weak kings the territory of the Satavahana kingdom was conquered by the Pallava rulers of South India and the Abhira rulers of Maharashtra by 300 A.D.

After the decline of the Satavahana dynasty to the rise of the Chalukya dynasty in 500 A.D., the history of the civilization in the Deccan is obscure. The interests of the Indian civilization, which suffered a setback in North India after the fall of the Gupta Empire, thrived prominently in the Deccan, due to the rule of the (i) Chalukya dynasty of Vatapi (Badami, in the Bijapur District) ; (ii) and the Rashtrakuta dynasty of Manyakheta (Malkhed).

(2) **Civilization under the Chalukyas of Vatapi (Badami)—(500-757 A.D.).** Out of the rulers of the Chalukya dynasty of Vatapi (Badami), the most powerful king was Pulkeshin II (609-642 A. D.).

(i) **Pulkeshin II (609-642 A.D.).** He was a great and intelligent military commander. He transformed his small kingdom into an empire.

(a) **Conquests of Pulkeshin II.** Pulkeshin II crushingly defeated the rulers of the Kadamba dynasty in South India. As a result of his military strength, Pulkeshin II made the ruler of the Ganga dynasty of South Mysore to submit to his authority. The King of Kerala (Alupa) also accepted the suzerainty of Pulkeshin II. Invading the territory of Kokan, Pulkeshin II reduced to his authority, the king of its Maurya dynasty. He also defeated the Latas, Malavas and the Gurjaras of North India. This brought him close to the empire of King Harsha Vardhana of Kanauj.

As Harsh Vardhana wanted to extend his power in the South and Pulkeshin II, wished to extend his sway in the North, there developed a clash of interests between them. In a great war fought between them on the banks of river Narmada, Pulkeshin II crushingly defeated emperor Harsha Vardhana in 620 A.D. This victory made Pulkeshin II a **Supreme Lord of South India**. That

led the kings of Kosala and Kalinga accept the supremacy of Pulkeshin II.

(b) **Government of Pulkeshin II.** To manage his vast empire Pulkeshin II developed an elaborate and efficient administration. It maintained law and order and exerted to attend to the needs of the subjects. As a result of its measures, the people were prosperous and happy under the rule of Pulkeshin II. This is borne out by the facts stated by the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, **Hiuen-Tsang**, who had visited the empire of Pulkeshin II in 641 A.D.

(c) **Diplomatic Relations of Pulkeshin II with Persia.** Pulkeshin II, being a mighty sovereign, maintained diplomatic relations to serve common interests of Seaborne trade with king **Khusru II** of Persia. In 625 A.D. he sent his special envoy to the Persian court. In return, Khusru II also sent his embassy to the court of Pulkeshin II at Badami.



(d) **Religious Toleration.** Though Pulkeshin II was a Hindu, he treated the followers of Buddhism and Jainism in a similar way as he treated the followers of Hinduism. It was due to his favour that the Jaina poet, **Ravikirti**, could construct a temple of Jinendra.

(ii) **Successors of Pulkeshin II (642-757 A.D.).** The Pallava King, **Narasimhavarmam I** (625-645 A.D.) was very much hostile to Pulkeshin II. He attacked Pulkeshin II in 642 A.D. and killed

him in a battle that brought to an end the glorious career of Pulkeshin II.

The successors of Pulkeshin II during 642-757 A.D. were not strong rulers. As a result of this the rulers of different dynasties of South India conquered the territories of the empire of Pulkeshin II and put an end to it in 757 A.D.

(a) **Contribution of the Chalukyas in Religion and Art.** The Chalukya rulers, who were Hindus, performed Ashvamedha, Vajapeya and other sacrifices to celebrate their victories. They constructed fine and huge temples of the Hindu Gods like Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva at Badami and Pattadakol.

Those rulers gave patronage to the Hindu and Jaina scholars equally. They granted villages to learned Jaina scholars and thereby promoted their studies and scholarship.

(3) **Civilization Under the Rashtrakuta Dynasty of Manyakheta or Malkhed (754-973 A.D.).** After the decline of the Chalukya dynasty of Vatapi (Badami), the interests of the Indian civilization and culture were supported and developed by the rulers of the Rashtrakuta dynasty during 754-973 A.D.

Out of the rulers of this dynasty the achievements of the following kings are important.

(i) **Dantidurga (754-757 A.D.).** Defeating the rulers of the Kanchi, Kalinga, Kosala, Malwa and Gujarat, he laid down the foundations of the Rashtrakuta empire.

(ii) **Krishna I (758-772 A.D.).** Conquering Konkan and defeating the kings of the Ganga dynasty and the Chalukya dynasty of Vengi he increased the territory of the Rashtrakuta empire.

As a result of prosperity which accrued to him, he gave patronage to arts and religion.

(a) **Ellora Temple of Lord Shiva.** The reign of Krishna I has become memorable because of this temple. He constructed a temple at Ellora in Marathwada in the honour of Lord Shiva of Hinduism. It is known as the **Kailashanatha Temple**. This temple has been carved out by the sculptors in a huge hill rock. It has a fine shrine room, hall, gateway and pillars. Its walls are decorated by the sculptors by carrying out in them beautifully the large scenes of the stories of the Ramayana. This temple is regarded as one of the beautiful pieces of art in India.

After the death of Krishna I, the notable ruler was Govind III (793-814 A.D.).

(iii) **Govinda III** (793-814 A.D.). He was a great military commander who by expanding the Rastrakuta empire brought a large measure of political stability in the Deccan.

(a) **Empire of Govinda III.** Govinda III defeated the kings of Gujarat, Malwa and Kanauj and brought under him the territories of North India upto Bengal. In south India, he extended the Rashtrakuta empire by defeating the rulers of the Pallava dynasty of Kanchi. He also won victories against the Chalukya King of Vengi.

To organize the matters of his vast empire properly, Govinda III made Manyakheta (Malkhed) which is in Marathwada, his capital city. As his administration was efficiently managed his subjects enjoyed an era of peace and prosperity during the time of his rule.

Govinda III died in 814 A.D. and was succeeded by Amoghavarsha I or Nripatunga.

(iv) **Amoghavarsha or Nripatunga I** (814-877 A.D.). He was the most illustrious king of the Rashtrakuta dynasty. His reign was prosperous. He fought continuously a victorious warfare against the rulers of the Chalukya and the Ganga dynasty of South India.

(a) **Patronage to Kannhda Language.** Amoghavarsha was himself a scholar and poet in the Kannada language. He took the title, 'Nripatunga' and composed a work of poetry, known as the *Kavirajamarga*. *Kavirajamarga* is the earliest known work on metrical composition in the Kannada language.

Being a man of cultured taste and sound learning, he saw to it that the scholars of his empire were well maintained and supported by various grants.

Under Amoghavarsha I, the Rashtrakuta empire experienced such a spell of prosperity that the Arabian merchant Sulaiman (851 A.D.) who wrote an account of India, was led to call Amoghavarsha I as a great King of India and compare his wealth and glory with that of the emperors of Rome, China and the Khalifa of Baghdad.

(v) **Decline of the Rashtrakutas.** After the death of Amoghavarsha I or Nripatunga in 877 A.D. the Rashtrakuta empire declined and came to an end in 937 A.D. The Rashtrakuta kings Krishna II (877-913 A.D.), Indra III (914-927 A.D.), Amoghavarsha II (927 A.D.), Govinda IV (928-939 A.D.), Krishna III (939-968 A.D.) and Karka II or Amoghavarsha IV (968-973 A.D.) made fruitless efforts to prevent the decline of the Rashtrakuta power in Deccan. When in 937 A.D. Karka II was defeated by Taila or Tailapa II

of the Western Chaluka dynasty, the Rashtrakuta rule became extinct in the Deccan.

(4) **Other Dynasties in the Deccan.** The other dynasties which struggled to serve the interests of civilization and culture in the Deccan were (a) the Western or Later Chalukya dynasty of Kalyani (Marathwada) (973-1199 A.D.) and (b) the Shilahara dynasty of Konkan (775-1150 A.D.). But as the rulers of these dynasties were not very strong, their achievements were not spectacular. The significant nature of their rule was its tolerant spirit by which they impartially and equally treated their subjects of different religions.

G. CIVILIZATION IN SOUTH INDIA (300-1000 A.D.)

(1) **History of South India upto 300 A.D.** The territory which is beyond the Southern bank of river Krishna is known as the **South India**. It is made up of the territories of Karnool, Mysore, Madras, Madura and Malabar.

The Pre-Dravidian people who were the inhabitants of South India, came under the rule of Chandragupta, Bindusara and Ashoka Maurya during the period of the fourth and the third centuries B.C. After the decline of the Mauryan rule in South India after the death of emperor Ashoka Maurya in 233 B.C., most of its territory was under the rulers of the Satavahana dynasty. When, by 300 A.D. the rule of the Satavahanas came to an end, in South India arose the Pallava dynasty to guide its fortunes.

(2) **Civilization under the Pallavas of Kanchi or Conjeevaram (300-898 A.D.).** The rulers of the Pallava dynasty who flourished in South India, promoted and developed the interests of the ancient Indian civilization and culture. Out of those rulers, the following kings were of notable and glorious achievements.

(i) **Mahendravarman I (600-630 A.D.).** He gave patronage to art and architecture. He was the first ruler in South India who got excavated rock-cut temples. His temples for the God Vishnu and Brahma at Dalavanur, Pallavaram and Mamandur are of great artistic skill.

Mahendravarman I was a patron of learning and he greatly encouraged poetry and music. He himself wrote an one-act play, the "**Mattavilasa Prahasan**" (**The Sport of the Drunkards**). It is full of satirical dialogues and humour. It throws a flood of light on the aspects of the religions and social life in South India which prevailed during the reign of Mahendravarman I.

(ii) **Narasimhavarman I (The Great) (630-668 A.D.).** He was a great commander who brought glory to the Pallava Kingdom by repeatedly defeating the Cholas and Keralas. In 642 A.D., he fought an unsuccessful battle against Pulkeshin II of the Chalukya dynasty of Vatapi in which Pulkeshin II lost life.

Narasimhavarman I conquered the island of Ceylon. For that conquest he had developed a powerful navy.

He encouraged Seaborne trade. During the period of his reign, the traders of the Pallava kingdom conducted a prosperous trade of precious gems with foreign countries.

(a) **Hiuen Tsang's Visit.** The Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang had visited the kingdom of Narasimhavarman I. In his travel account of India, Hiuen Tsang has stated that the people of the kingdom of Narasimhavarman I were prosperous, virtuous, and they loved and admired learning.

(iii) **Narasimhavarman II (690-715 A.D.).** He was a patron of architecture. He constructed the famous stone temple of **Kailashanatha** at Kanchi.

Narasimhavarman II was a patron of the men of letters. It is believed that the famous rhetorician (a writer in eloquent language), **Dandin** was in his court.

(a) **Rhetorician Dandin.** Dandin was a famous scholar in the Sanskrit language. He had a unique style and skill to express much meaning in few appropriate words.

Out of his works, the **Dashakumaracharita (Tales of the ten Princes)**, has made his name immortal in the Sanskrit literature.

In this work, Dandin has narrated exciting stories in simple style and with great artistic skill. The ten heroes are shown in these stories as coming in contact with thieves, merchants, princesses, prostitutes, peasants and wild hillmen. Through these stories, Dandin has shown skilfully the aspects of human nature and ways of life in the world.

(iv) **Decline of the Pallavas.** After the death of Narasimhavarman II in 715 A.D., the kings of the Pallava dynasty were not strong. Therefore, the Pallava dynasty declined and came to an end in 875 A.D. in South India. The rulers of the Pandya, Rashtrakuta and Chola dynasties, then, replaced the rule of the Pallavas in South India.

(v) **Contribution of the Pallavas to Learning.** The kings of Pallava dynasty were cultured men who promoted the interests of learning in South India.

(a) **Kanchi—The Centre of Learning.** Of what importance the Universities of Kashi and Takshashila were in North India in the matters of learning and scholarship in ancient India, the university of Kanchi was in South India.

Kanchi was a seat of Sanskrit learning. It was famous for its instructions in the Vedic Studies. In it, instructions were given in the various branches of human learning, by scholars who belonged to different religions. Its expenses were defrayed through the ample grants given by the Pallava rulers and the rich men of the Pallava Kingdom.

In his travel account of India, the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang, has bestowed lavish praise on the centre of learning of Kanchi. He has stated that there existed many temples and schools of all religions at Kanchi.

Out of the many students of merit who had taken instructions at the university of Kanchi, the most famous was Mayurasharman, who founded the Kadamba dynasty (345-1000 A.D.) in Deccan.

(3) **Civilization Under the Cholas of Tanjore (846-1267 A.D.).** In the modern territories of Tanjore and Trichinapalli in South India, Vijayalaya of the Chola family, founded the Chola kingdom in 846 A.D.

Amongst the kings of Chola dynasty in the ancient period, the important one was Rajaraja I (985-1014 A.D.).

(i) **Rajaraja I (985-1014 A.D.).** He was a powerful ruler who transformed the Chola kingdom into an empire. This afforded an opportunity to his descendents in the Mediaeval period of Indian history, to develop the interests of Indian culture and civilization.

(a) **His Conquests.** Rajaraja I maintained a powerful navy. With its help, he destroyed the fleet of the Chera kings of Kerala. Defeating the Pandya king of Madura, Rajaraja I, brought in his Chola kingdom, the territory of Coorg. He effected the conquest of Ceylon and defeating the rulers of Mysore and Vengi, established his political supremacy in South India. Rajaraja I, with the help of his efficient fleet, added the islands of Laccadiv and Maldiv to his empire.

As he was a builder of a vast Chola empire, Rajaraja I, took the title, the "Chola Martanda".

(b) **His Religious Toleration.** Rajaraja I was a follower of Shaivism. He constructed the Rajarajeshwara temple in the honour of Lord Shiva. Though he was a worshipper of Lord Shiva, Rajaraja I, was tolerant towards the followers of Vaishnavism, Buddhism and Jainism. He gave donations for the construction of the temples of Lord Vishnu and granted a village to the Buddhist Vihara which was constructed in the island of Malaya.

(ii) **Other Rulers of the Chola Dynasty.** After the death of Rajaraja I in 1014 A.D., different Chola rulers developed the interests of the Indian civilization. Their main achievement lay in developing a government administration which had in it the participation of the subjects and their local bodies. Its study forms the part of the Mediaeval history of India.

The Chola dynasty came to an end in 1267 A.D. when its last ruler, **Rajendra III** was defeated by the Pandya dynasty of South India.

(4) **Civilization Under the Pandya Dynasty (600-1310 A.D.).** In the modern territories of Madura, Ramanad and Tinnevely existed the ancient kingdom of the Pandya dynasty.

(i) **Rajasimha (740-770 A.D.)** He was the only notable ruler of the Pandya dynasty in the ancient period of Indian History.

He, conquering the territories from the kings of the Chola and Chera dynasties, firmly laid down the foundations of the Pandya kingdom in South India. To celebrate his military victories, he performed several horse sacrifices.

(ii) **Other Pandya Rulers (770-1310 A.D.).** The achievements of the Pandya kings during 770-1000 A.D. were not very significant. Out of the other rulers of that dynasty after 1000 A.D., **Jatavarman Sundara Pandya (1251-1272 A.D.)** was a ruler of notable achievements. The study of these achievements forms a part of the Mediaeval history of India. The Pandya dynasty came to an end in 1310 A.D., when **Malik Kafur**, the general of Sultan Allauddin Khilji of Delhi, conquered the Pandya kingdom.

(5) **Civilization Under The Chera Dynasty of Kerala (300-1311 A.D.).** The modern territory of Malabar, Travancore and Cochin formed the area of the ancient kingdom of the Chera dynasty of Kerala.

Its rulers were not of glorious achievements. But they were noble persons who followed a policy of toleration towards the people of other religions.

(i) **Colony of the Jews in Kerala (900 A.D.).** The Jew people of Palestine who migrated from their land (Palestine), found a place for settlement in Malabar (Kerala kingdom) because of the tolerant and humanitarian spirit of the Hindu Chera king, **Bhaskara Ravivarman**, in 900 A.D. By his charter, that noble king gave lands and privileges to a Jew named **Joseph Rabban..** This planted a new religion, **Judaism**, in ancient India.

(ii) **End of the Chera Dynasty—1311 A. D.** The Chera kingdom came to an end when its last ruler **Ravivarman Kulashekhara** was defeated in 1311 A. D. by king **Rudra I** of the **Kakatiya** dynasty (1130-1423 A.D.).

H. SHANKARACHARYA (788-820 A. D.) AND THE REVIVAL AND REFORMATION OF HINDUISM

(1) **Early Life of Shankaracharya.** The defender of Brahmanism and great Hindu theologician, **Shankaracharya**, was born in a **Nambudiri Brahmana** family at **Kaladi** in Kerala. He lost his father early. That made Shankara suffer from different hardships. He was a courageous child and therefore while going through the hardships of life, he completed his Vedic education and Sanskrit studies in few years.

As Shankara had the feeling that he was born to serve some religious mission of Hinduism, with the consent of his mother, he became a **Sanyasi** and renounced the wordly attachments.

After becoming a **Sanyasi**, in his wanderings, on the banks of river **Narmada**, Shankara became the disciple of **Guru Govindapada**. When the studies of Shankara were over, **Guru Govindapada** sent him to **Banaras (Kashi)** to expound the pure and simple **Hinduism of Vedanta**.

(2) **Work of Shankaracharya for the Revival and Reformation of Hinduism.** At **Banaras**, **Shankaracharya** did the work by which he caused the revival and reformation of Hinduism.

(i) **Preaching of the Advaita Philosophy.** Due to his intense study of the **Upanishadas**, **Shankaracharya** had fully grasped the **Vedanta** (the end of the Vedas ; the final goal or meaning), *i.e.*, the relation between **World Soul** and individual **Soul** or self. From that study, **Shankaracharya** supposed **God** and **Soul** identical. This is known as the doctrine or Philosophy or **Advaita** (monism).

According to it, **Shankaracharya** asserted that the eternal, impersonal '**Brahman**' is the only ultimate reality. He explained the phenomena of the Universe as due to the power called "**Maya**" by which that absolute, without undergoing any change in or by itself,

appears to us as an everchanging succession of phenomena conditioned by time and space.

Shankaracharya stated that the spirit of man is identical with the 'Supreme Spirit' and that our sufferings and errors are due to the failure to realise this identity. He stated that this realisation can procure liberation (Salvation). One of the chief doctrines of Shankaracharya is that **Karma** (work) and **Upasana** (worship) are subordinate to **Dhyana** (knowledge). Shankaracharya pointed out that owing to ignorance (**Avidya**), we see diversity where there is unity. **Moksha** (Salvation) is attained when the truth is realised.

(ii) **No Recognition of the Caste Distinctions Based on Birth.** The Advaita philosophy led Shankaracharya to give up the observance of the caste distinctions based on birth. A person, who had the full knowledge of the Brahman, was regarded by him as his teacher. He said, "He who has learnt to look upon all as Brahman, is really my Guru—be he a **Chandala** or a **Brahmin**."

(iii) **Rejection of the Animal Sacrifices of Old Hinduism.** Shankaracharya encouraged such Vedic rites which did not involve animal sacrifice. He also introduced in the religious life of the Hindus some forms of **Upasana** (devotion).

As a result of this it is said that Shankaracharya accepted in Hinduism the Principle of **Ahimsa** preached by **Buddha** and followed by **Buddhism**.

(iv) **Introduction of the Panchayatana Puja (Worship of Five Gods).** Shankaracharya introduced in Hinduism, the worship of the five Gods, **Sun, Ambika, Vishnu, Ganapati** and **Shiva**, on the same pedestal. That laid emphasis on the idea that those were not five different Gods, but they are the one God worshipped in five different forms in different parts of India, each individual choosing according to his bent.

People instinctively believe in powers higher than themselves. They think that the higher powers are outside themselves. That leads them to worship the outside Gods to help them as they feel that the Gods are more powerful and so could help them. This psychological necessity of the people was properly understood by Shankaracharya. That is why, even when he felt that the higher powers are not outside the people but those are in the higher selves of the people, he introduced the worship of the five Gods (**Panchayatana Puja**) which is also called as the **Shiva-Puja**.

By this, Shankaracharya is said to have adjusted with the views about Salvation propounded by the thinkers like **Mandana**

Mishra of the **Mimamsa** School of thought in Hinduism. Whereas the thinkers of the **Mimamsa** School thought that **Karma** (action) alone and by itself was the surest way for man to attain Salvation, **Shankaracharya** thought that it (Karma) has its inevitable place in the early stage of the religious or spiritual growth of man. According to him **Dhyana Marga** (Path of Knowledge) was the higher one in the methods to acquire Salvation.

(v) **Rejection of the Atheism (Disbelief in the Existence of God) of Buddhism.** In his teachings Lord Buddha did not speak of God. The Buddhist thinkers after Lord Buddha, evolved rigorous logic to defend their thought. Their logic did not feel the necessity for God. But majority of the followers of Buddhism could not absorb that reasoning and their atheism. They worshipped Lord Buddha as a God by preparing his idols. As they worshipped Buddha's idols with pomp, splendour and ceremonies, the Buddhist monks got turned into the priests for those new ceremonies. That had made to disappear the vigour and purity which had existed in Buddhism during the time of Lord Buddha.

When the spiritual life in Buddhism was at a low ebb, **Shankaracharya** upheld the authority of the Vedas and proved the existence of the God, i.e., the Brahman to the Buddhist thinkers in the discussions.

(vi) **Shankaracharya's Literature to Expound His Views.** While convincing his opponents in discussions about the Advaita Philosophy, authority of the Vedas and the existence of God, **Shankaracharya** wrote a vast literature to expound and establish firmly his views. That literature is made up of (a) the Commentaries on the **Prasthanatraya** the **Bhagwad Gita**; **Upanishads** and the **Brahma Sutra**; (b) **Viveka Chudamani**; (c) **Atmabodha**; (d) **Satasloki**; (e) **Prabodhasudhakara**; (f) **Saundarya Lahari**, etc.

The study of these works spread the philosophy of Hinduism expounded by **Shankaracharya** in all the parts of India and that revived and reformed Hinduism in the 9th century A.D.

(vii) **Establishment of the Mathas to continue Shankaracharya's Work.** **Shankaracharya** travelled in all the parts of India to preach and teach the Vedantic religion. To continue his work in the future, he being a great organizer, he established the following four Shankara Mathas at (a) **Badrinath** in Northern India, (b) **Puri** in Eastern India, (c) **Dwaraka** in Western India, (d) **Shringeri** in South India. Due to the establishment of these four Mathas in

the four corners of India, Shankaracharya encouraged the conception of a culturally united India.

As Shankaracharya did the work of the revival and reformation of Hinduism, he earned the epithet, **Jagadguru (World Pontiff)**. Due to his work, Hinduism became a revitalized religion and gave a setback to Buddhism in India.

MAIN POINTS

A. NORTH INDIA FROM THE FALL OF THE GUPTAS TO THE RISE OF HARSHA VARDHANA

After the fall of Gupta empire, there prevailed conditions of political confusion in North India up to the time of King Harsha Vardhan.

B. CIVILIZATION UNDER HARSHA VARDHANA (606-647 A.D.)

Harsha Vardhana was merely a boy of sixteen years, when he became the king of Thaneshwar.

(i) **Harsha's Conquests and Empire.** During 606-612 A.D. Harsha became an undisputed master of North India. In 620 A.D. when Harsha tried to extend his power in the Deccan, he was defeated by Pulkeshin II of the Chalukya dynasty of Vatapi (Badami).

(2) **Government Under Harsha.** Harsha, by conducting inspection tours made his well-organised government serve the subjects.

(3) **Harsha's Patronage to Education and Learning.** (i) Education ;

(a) University of Nalanda. (ii) Learning, (a) Poet Bana. (4)

Harsha's Religious Activities. (5) Political Breakdown in the North After Harsha.

C. CIVILIZATION UNDER THE RULERS OF KANAUJ (725-1000 A.D.)

(i) **Yasho Varman (725-752 A.D.).** (a) Yashovarman's Conquests ; (b) Yashovarman's Patronage to Literature and Learning ; (i) Poet Vakpati ; (ii) Dramatist Bhavabhuti ; (iii) Kumarila Bhatta and the Revival of Vedic Studies. (c) **Kanauj After Yashovarman.** After Yashovarman, Kanauj was ruled by the kings of the Gurjara Pratihara Dynasty—816-1036 A.D. Its rulers furthered the interests of Indian civilization and culture.

(1) King Mihir Bhoj (836-885 A.D.). (2) King Mahendrapala I (885-910 A.D.) ; (i) Patronage to Literature : (a) Poet and Dramatist Raja Shekhara. His famous works are (i) Karpuramanjari, (ii) Bala Ramayana, (iii) Bala Bharata, and (iv) Kavya-

mimamsa. (3) Other Kings of Kanauj.

D. ADVANCE OF THE ARABIAN CIVILIZATION IN SINDH (712 A.D.)

- (1) Arabian conquest of Sindh by Muhammad Bin Kasim ;
- (2) Junaid ; (3) Arabian Efforts to extend Muslim Power Foiled ;
- (4) Effects of the Arabian Muslim Rule in Sindh ; (a) Political Effects ; (b) Cultural Effects.

E. CIVILIZATION IN NORTH INDIA AT THE TIME OF THE INVASION OF MAHAMUD OF GAZNI IN 1000 A.D.

- (1) Rise of small kingdoms during 944-1000 A.D. in India ;
- (2) Kingdom of Gazni before Mahamud of Gazni ; (3) Sultan Mahamud of Gazni (997-1030 A.D.) ; (i) His Invasions.

F. CIVILIZATION IN THE DECCAN (500-1000 A.D.)

- (1) History of the Deccan upto 500 A.D. ; (2) Civilization under the Chalukyas of Vatapi (Badami)—500-757 A.D. (i) Pulkeshin II (609-642 A.D.), (a) Conquests of Pulkeshin II. Defeated King Harsha Vardhana in 620 A.D. ; (b) Government of Pulkeshin II ; (c) Diplomatic Relations of Pulkeshin II with Persia ; (d) Religious Toleration. (ii) Successors of Pulkeshin II (642-757 A.D.), (a) Contribution of the Chalukyas in religion and art. (3) Civilization under the Rashtrakuta Dynasty of Manyakheta or Malkhed (754-973 A.D.). (i) Dantidurga (754-757 A.D.) ; (ii) Krishna I (758-772 A.D.) ; (a) Ellora Temple of Lord Shiva ; (iii) Govinda III (793-814 A.D.) ; (a) Empire of Govinda III ; (iv) Amoghavarsha I or Nripatunga (814-877 A.D.) ; (a) Patronage to Kannada Language ; (v) Decline of the Rashtrakutas. (4) Other Dynasties in the Deccan.

G. CIVILIZATION IN SOUTH INDIA (300-1000 A.D.)

- (1) History of South India upto 300 A.D. ; (2) Civilization under the Pallavas of Kanchi or Conjeevaram (300-898 A.D.). (i) Mahendravarman I (600-630 A.D.) ; (ii) Narasimhavarman I (the Great)—(630-668 A.D.) ; (a) Hiuen Tsang's visit. (iii) Narasimhavarman II (690-715 A.D.) ; (a) Rhetorician Dandin, His famous work—*Dashakumaracharita* (Tales of the Ten Princes). (iv) Decline of the Pallavas. (v) Contribution of the Pallavas to Learning ; (a) Kanchi—The Centre of Learning. (3) Civilization under the Cholas of Tanjore (846-1267 A.D.). (i) Rajaraja I (985-1014 A.D.) ; (a) His Conquests. He took the title 'Chola-Martanda,' (b) His religious Toleration, (ii) Other Rulers of the Chola Dynasty. (4) Civilization under the Pandya Dynasty (600-

1310 A.D.) : (i) Rajasimha (740—770 A.D.) ; (ii) Other Pandya Rulers (770—1310 A.D.). (5) Civilization under the Chera Dynasty of Kerala (300—1311 A.D.). (i) Colony of the Jews in Kerala (900 A.D.) ; (ii) End of the Chera Dynasty—1311 A.D.

H. SHANKARACHARYA (788-820 A.D.) AND THE REVIVAL AND REFORMATION OF HINDUISM

(1) Early Life of Shankaracharya. (2) Work of Shankaracharya, (i) Preaching of the Advaita Philosophy, (ii) Not recognition of the Caste System Based on Birth, (iii) Rejection of the Animal Sacrifices of Old Hinduism, (iv) Introduction of the Panchayatana Puja (Worship of Five Gods), (v) Rejection of the Atheism (Disbelief in the Existence of God) of Buddhism, (vi) Shankaracharya's Literature to Expound his views, (vii) Establishment of the Mathas to continue Shankaracharya's work.

Because of his work for the revival and reformation, Shankaracharya earned the epithet, Jagadguru (World Pontiff). Hinduism which became revitalized due to his work, gave a setback to Buddhism in India.

TEST QUESTIONS

Write Notes on :—

- (i) Harsha Vardhana ;
 - (ii) University of Nalanda and Kanchi ;
 - (iii) Yashovarman of Kanauj ;
 - (iv) King Mihira Bhoja ;
 - (v) Effects of the Arabian Muslim rule in Sindh ;
 - (vi) Mahamud of Gazni ;
 - (vii) Pulkeshin II ;
 - (viii) Narasimhavarman I ;
 - (ix) Rajaraja I ;
 - (x) Shankaracharya.
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OUTLINE

- A. Causes for the Expansion of Indian Culture**
 - B. Expansion of Indian Culture in Central Asia**
 - G. Expansion of Indian Culture in Southeast Asia**
 - D. Assimilation of Indian Culture in Southeast Asia**
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A. CAUSES FOR THE EXPANSION OF INDIAN CULTURE

(1) **The Stock of knowledge of Ancient India.** The ancient Indians were a people of great merit. In their civilized life, which started from the time of the Sindhu civilization, Indian scientists developed different sciences ; the Indian builders developed different patterns of architecture and the artists developed the arts of sculpture, painting, etc. Since the Indian view about life was jubilant, Indian poets, dramatists and writers produced works of great merit. As the Indian thinkers loved sincerity, love, truth, etc., in life, they thought about the problems of human life in the world and developed the great religions of India, namely, Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism to give direction to the Indian way of life with a view to make it moral, virtuous and of humane spirit.

(2) **Reasons for the Expansion of Indian Culture.** All this rich stock of knowledge got transmitted to the other parts of the world due to different reasons.

(i) **Indian Trade with other Countries.** The archacological and literary sources prove that the Indians conducted trade with different countries of the world since the time of the Sindhu civilization. Due to trade, the Indian people came in contact with the people of other Asian countries. When the people of Central Asia and Southeast Asia learnt about the different sciences, arts, literature and religions developed by the Indians, they, finding those matters useful to develop their civilized life , adopted and followed them. Thus trade proved to be a vehicle through which

Indian stock of knowledge and culture spread in the Asian countries.

(ii) **Coming of the People of the Asian Countries in India.** The people of the other Asian countries also came in contact with the Indian Land due to different reasons.

(a) **Trade.** Just as the Indian traders conducted trade with the other Asian countries, the traders of these countries also established trade contacts with India. Due to that they came to know the stock of knowledge and the cultural matters developed by the ancient Indians. After returning to their countries, they transmitted the knowledge acquired in India to their own people.

(b) **Assimilation of the Asian Tribes in the Indian Society and Religions.** Many Asian tribesmen of Central Asian countries conquered portions of land for their settlement in northern India after the fall of the Mauryan dynasty in 184 B.C.

During the period 184 B.C.-300 A.D. the tribes of the Yavanas, Shakas, Parthians and Kushanas of Central Asia conquered parts of northern India. After that they settled in India permanently and became the members of Indian society after adopting the Indian religions, namely, Hinduism and Buddhism.

As they were from Central Asia, they kept their contacts with the people of that region even after settling down in India. By that they transmitted the knowledge of Indian matters to the people of Central Asia.

(c) **Work of the Buddhist Missionaries.** The monks of Buddhism, which is a missionary religion, went from India to the different countries in Asia to spread the noble teachings of Lord Buddha. When the people of those countries liked Buddha's teachings, they adopted Buddhism. By that they became familiar with the Indian matters of life and adopted those to improve their civilized life.

B. EXPANSION OF INDIAN CULTURE IN CENTRAL ASIA

Indian contacts with the territory of Central Asia existed since the time of the Rigvedic period (2500 B.C.). References in the Rigveda prove that the Aryan people of India had intimate knowledge of the territory of Afghanistan.

Territory of Central Asia came in closer contact during 517-331 B.C. when King Darius I of Persia, whose empire included

parts of Central Asia, conquered the territories in Punjab up to the river Sindhu. During this period the Indian traders conducted trade with Persia and parts of Central Asia.

But the more closer ties and contacts of the Indians got established with Central Asia, when the rule of the most prominent King of India, Chandragupta Maurya, spread up to Kabul and Kandahar during 305-298 B.C. In that period, the Indian administration prevailed at Kabul and Kandahar and due to it the Indians came in closer contacts with the people of Central Asia.

After Chandragupta Maurya, his grandson, Ashoka (273-233 B.C.), who had renounced warfare to conquer fresh territories, had sent the Buddhist missionaries to Bactria. Those missionaries had made a profound impression upon the Greek ruler of Bactria. Due to the work of the Buddhist monks in Bactria, its people got the knowledge of Buddhism. The immediate result of this was to the effect that King Menander of Bactria became a follower of Buddhism after when he conquered lands in India in the first century B.C. The celebrated Buddhist sacred work, **Milinda Panho** (the Questions of Milinda or Menander) clearly proves the influence of Buddhism on the people of Bactria.

The close contact of the Indians with the Bactrian Greeks (Yavanas), led to the development of the **Gandhara School of Art** in Afghanistan. That school made a combination of the principles of the Indian art and the Greek art and produced works of fine artistic skill.

During the period of the Kushanas, who were the Central Asian tribes and who had built up an empire in Central Asia and parts of northern India, India got closely connected with Central Asia. The Kushana kings, Kanishka, Huviska and Vasudeva became the carriers of Indian thought and culture into Central Asia. Kanishka who was the patron of Mahayana Buddhism sent Buddhist missionaries in Central Asia to spread the noble teachings of Buddhism.

As a result of these matters, the people of Central Asia constructed in their cities the Buddhist Viharas, Hindu temples and prepared and worshipped the images of Lord Buddha.

The spread of Indian culture in Central Asia transformed the barbarian tribes of that area into civilized and cultural communities.

C. EXPANSION OF INDIAN CULTURE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

The countries of Southeast Asia in which the expansion of Indian culture took place in the ancient times were : **Cambodia, Champa, Java, Sumatra, Borneo and Bali.**

In those countries when highly developed civilization and culture did not exist, the Indian conquerors, traders and missionaries of Buddhism went and effected the spread of Indian culture.

(i) **Cambodia** The modern country, Cambodia, was called in the ancient times as **Kamboja** The Chinese called it as **Funan**.

It is traditionally believed that a Hindu Brahmin, Kaundinya, of India, conquered Cambodia in the first century A.D. and planted Indian civilization and culture in that land. Kaundinya founded a Hindu dynasty in Cambodia. Since that time, up to the 14th century A.D., Cambodia was ruled by kings of different dynasties who bore Indian names.

(2) **Champa.** The territory of Champa is also known as the **Annam**. In it, in the second century A.D., a Hindu King, Shri Mara founded his dynasty. In Champa, after that period, ruled many Hindu dynasties and made it a powerful country. Those rulers introduced Indian civilization, culture, literature, arts and architecture in Champa.

(3) **Java.** The country, Java, was also known in the ancient world as "**Yavadvipa**". It is held by the scholars that Java was ruled by the Hindu Kings from second century A.D. onwards. The name of the Hindu king who established his dynasty is not certain. The Hindu kings of Java had their names which ended with **Varman**. Their rule existed in Java up to the 15th century A.D.

(4) **Sumatra.** Sumatra was known in the ancient times as "**Suvarnadvipa**". In the fourth century A.D. in it got established a Hindu dynasty. It laid down the foundations of civilization and culture in Sumatra. The earliest kingdom of Sumatra was known by the name "**Sri-Vijaya**".

(5) **Borneo.** The territory of Borneo was known in the ancient times as the "**Varunadvipa**". In it, King Mulavarman, who is regarded as a member of the Kaundinya family which ruled over Cambodia, founded a Hindu dynasty in the fourth century A.D. He and his successors introduced civilized and cultural life in Borneo.

(6) **Bali.** In the ancient age, the territory of Bali was known as the Balidvipa. It is held traditionally that a member of the Kaundinya family of Champa established his Hindu Kingdom in Bali in the sixth century A.D. and made a beginning of civilization and culture in that country.

D. ASSIMILATION OF INDIAN CULTURE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

The people of Cambodia, Champa, Java, Sumatra, Borneo and Bali were profoundly influenced by the matters of the Indian institutions, religions, literature and arts. Since those matters were superior to their own things of life, they accepted the Indian matters to shape the course of their civilized and cultural life.

(1) **Adoption of the Caste System.** To settle the human relationship in their society, the people of Cambodia, Champa, Java, Sumatra and Bali accepted the caste system which was the chief characteristic of the Hindu Society in India. According to the arrangement of the castes in that system, the people of the above countries also developed the castes of the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. Though the structure of the Hindu caste system was adopted by those people, they did not observe in it a rigid manner as it was observed in India. In their societies sharp distinctions between the members of different castes did not exist as those existed in India. In their caste system a member of any caste could follow the occupation he liked. The women of their societies enjoyed property and succession rights in contrast to the women in ancient India.

(2) **Adoption of the Indian Religions.** (i) **Hinduism** In Cambodia, Champa, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, and Bali, the people largely adopted Hinduism for their religious life. They worshipped the Hindu gods—Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

The Brahmanas who acted as priests in those countries were well versed in the text of the Vedas, Vedangas and the Buddhist scriptures. The kings and the ministers of those countries possessed sound knowledge of the contents of the Hindu Dharma-shastras.

In those countries the people lived a pious life and they had developed arrangements in the temples for the daily recitation of the sacred epics of Hinduism—Ramayana and Mahabharata.

(ii) **Buddhism.** Another Indian religion which was adopted

popularly by the people of Sumatra and Champa, was the Mahayana Buddhism. The kings of Java and Sumatra were the great patrons of Buddhism. Those kings had contacts with the Pala rulers of Bengal. They were also in close contact with the Buddhist centres like Nalanda in India.

(3) **Adoption of Hindu Political Institutions.** The people of Cambodia, Champa, Java, Sumatra, Borneo and Bali adopted the monarchical form of government which was popular in India. Like the Hindu rulers of ancient India, the rulers of those countries managed their government work and administration with the help of different ministers and officials. Their laws and legal institutions were based on the contents of the Manusmriti which is the most important work of Hinduism.

(4) **Adoption of the Sanskrit Language and Hindu Literature.** For the purpose of their official use, the Hindu rulers of the Southeast Asian countries used the Sanskrit language of India. In those countries, the people used the Sanskrit language to engrave inscriptions and to write literature.

The people of the countries of Southeast Asia read with delight the Indian literature of the Ramayana, Mahabharata and the Puranas.

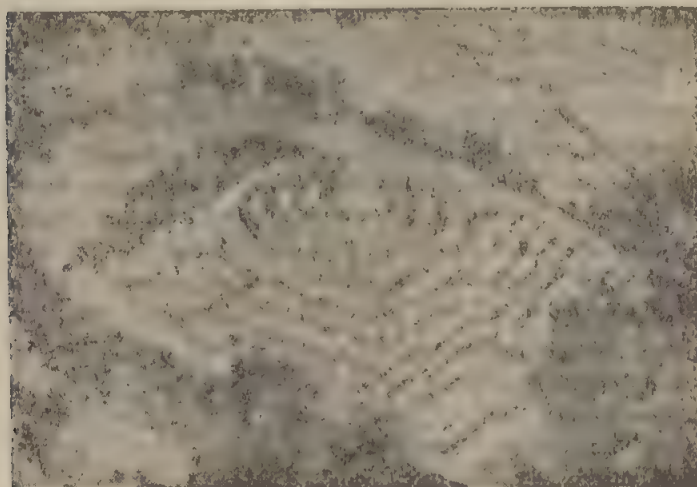
(5) **Adoption of Indian Art and Architecture.** (i) **Art.** The sculptors of the Southeast Asian countries followed the methods of the Indian sculptors to prepare the images of the gods and goddesses. Those sculptors were influenced by the Indian sculptors of the Gupta period.

(ii) **Architecture.** In the construction of their buildings, temples and the Buddhist stupas, the builders of the countries of Southeast Asia adopted the models, patterns and techniques followed by the builders in ancient India. The specimen of these matters is found in the construction of the Buddhist stupa of Borobudur in Java.

(a) **The Buddhist Stupa of Borobudur.** The Buddhist stupa of Borobudur in Java was constructed in 750 A.D. by the Shailendra kings of Shri Vijaya, a mighty kingdom comprising Java and Sumatra. It is similar in style to the Buddhist Stupa at Sanchi in India.

This stupa which is set on a square platform, is developed into a stepped pyramid. This vast structure, which is regarded

as one of the wonders in the art of construction in the world, is made beautiful by employing ornamentation.



Thus because of the expansion of the Indian culture in Southeast Asia, the life of the people of that region became civilized and cultured.

MAIN POINTS

A. CAUSES FOR THE EXPANSION OF INDIAN CULTURE

(1) The Stock of knowledge of Ancient India. (2) Reasons for the Expansion of Indian Culture. (i) Indian Trade with other countries ; (ii) Coming of the people of the Asian countries in India. (a) Trade ; (b) Assimilation of the Asian Tribes in the Indian Society and Religions ; (c) Work of the Buddhist Missionaries.

B. EXPANSION OF INDIAN CULTURE IN CENTRAL ASIA

Since the early Vedic Age (2500 B.C.) onwards the Indian traders traded with Central Asia. The Buddhist missionaries also went in it to spread Buddhism. The Asian tribesmen conquered lands in India and became followers of Indian religion. All these matters gave the knowledge of Indian religions, sciences, arts, etc., to the people of Central Asia. Finding those matters better, the people of Central Asia adopted them. That made their life civilized and cultured.

C. EXPANSION OF INDIAN CULTURE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

(1) Cambodia; (2) Champa ; (3) Java ; (4) Sumatra ; (5) Borneo ; and (6) Bali.

D. ASSIMILATION OF INDIAN CULTURE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

(1) Adoption of the Caste System ; (2) Adoption of the Indian Religion ; (i) Hinduism; (ii) Buddhism. (3) Adoption of Hindu Political Institutions ; (4) Adoption of the Sanskrit language and Hindu Literature ; (5) Adoption of Indian Art and Architecture. (i) Art ; (ii) Architecture ; (a) The Buddhist Stupa of Borobudur.

Expansion of Indian culture in Central Asia and Southeast Asia made the life of the people of those regions civilized and cultured.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Give an account of the spread and expansion of India's culture in Southeast Asia.

2. Write notes on :—

(i) Stupa of Borobudur.

3. Narrate briefly how and why a culture spreads outside the country of its origin ?
(B. U. April, 1973)

4. State briefly where and how culture of ancient India spread.
(B. U. April, 1973).

5. What evidence have you of the spread of ancient art, language and religions in the following :—

(i) Ceylon, (ii) Cambodia, (iii) Central Asia, (iv) Mongolia.
(B. U. April, 1973).

OUTLINE

- A. The Land and the People
- B. Life in China up to the Sixth Century B.C. Enlightenment
- C. Sixth Century B.C. Enlightenment
- D. Consolidation of China under the Chin, Han and Tang Dynasties and Government in Ancient China
- E. Science in Ancient China
- F. Architecture and Art in Ancient China
- G. Chinese Influence in Korea, Japan and Vietnam

A. THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

(1) **The Land.** China is located along the east coast of Asia. To its Eastern side exists the Pacific Ocean. It has the plateau of Tibet to its Western side. The plateau of Mongolia exists to its Northern side. The Southern side of China is touched by the waters of the Pacific Ocean. As the outside people could not cross these natural barriers, the Chinese got facility to develop their civilization without any obstruction.

The topography of China has in it barren deserts, hills and upland plateaus. Due to these factors and the sea surrounding, the land of China largely is not fertile. But in its vast territory, which has insufficient rainfall, the rivers, Yangtze Kiang (which means the Son of the Ocean) and the Hwang Ho (the Yellow river), have brought fertility to the area which is covered by their water. That is why in their valley developed the prosperous Chinese civilization in 5000 B.C. These rivers which rise in the western mountains of China and flow eastward have proved to be a great boon to the people of China. They created favourable conditions for the development of the ancient Chinese civilization.

(2) **The People.** China is the place of human habitation since the remote past of mankind in the world. It is gathered by the

historians that the people of Paleolithic and Neolithic ways of life were attracted to the fertile agricultural soil present in the valley of Yangtze Kiang and Hwang Ho when they experienced the dearth of food and fodder to support men and animals. In that valley, they migrated from the plateau of Mongolia and made a beginning of their civilized life in 5000 B.C.

Those people belonged to the Mongolian race. As they were from the hilly tracts of lands and the area of the desert of Gobi which is in the east of China, they were of sound physique and nomadic ways of life. They were a brave and warlike people.

B. LIFE IN CHINA UP TO THE SIXTH CENTURY B.C. ENLIGHTENMENT

After getting settled down in the valley of rivers Yangtze Kiang and Hwang Ho during 5000 B.C. the people of China lived a settled and organised life.

(1) **Social Life.** In the Chinese society existed different classes of people whose position in the classes was decided on the basis of their merit, skill and ability in the work which they did. They did not have classes of the people based on the principle of heredity. In the society of China the classes of its members were settled on the basis of the work they did. That society had the following four classes below the priest-emperor ; (a) the literary class ; (b) the cultivators of the land ; (c) the artisans ; and (d) the mercantile class. The member who belonged to the literary class was called as a "Mandarin" and was much respected in the Chinese society.

The condition of the life of the tillers of the soil was not good. They were exploited by the rich people. Similarly, the poor people in the society were not given proper treatment by others. The women were also not treated with honour in the Chinese society by the sixth century B.C.

(2) **Political Life.** In the political matters China was not a well organised country under a strong sovereign. Under Emperor Wu-Wang, the founder of the Chou Dynasty (1122-255 B.C.), a political arrangement of some sort was made. To recognize the government in China, he created five orders of nobility. He granted the members of these five orders fiefs (landed estates), over which they ruled after the manner of monarchs.

Those states became members of a confederation of the states. Together with these states, there also existed other several states in China whose rulers pledged their allegiance to the Emperor, who was regarded by them as "the Son of Heaven".

By the sixth century B.C., these states which were semi-independent, fought wars with each other and created political confusion in China. The rulers of these states did not take the care of defending their country properly—China—and failed to protect the Chinese people from the attacks of the Tartar people of the Northern hilly areas. Thus the period before the sixth century B.C. was characterized by wars, invasions which weakened the central power of the emperor. The rulers of the different semi-independent states also did not manage their administrations properly. This developed an atmosphere of discontent in China by the sixth century B.C. It is due to these factors that the Chinese philosophers tried to teach the people the principles, the brighter ideas and the proper way to be followed to make life ideal.

C. SIXTH CENTURY B.C. ENLIGHTENMENT IN CHINA

In the sixth century B.C. there arose philosophers in China who gave systems of thought to make the life of the Chinese people an ideal one.

(1) **Lao Tze (604-517 B.C.) and Taoism.** In their thinking process of religious and spiritual matters, the Chinese people regarded God not as a Creator but the Supreme judge of human actions in the world. As a result of this, the Chinese searched for a path or a way of life which led them to escape from the punishment of God. Due to the desire to escape the punishment of God, the Chinese thinkers tried to find out the course of Right conduct to live life in the world.

Such a course of Right conduct was preached in China by the Chinese philosopher, Lao Tze (the Old Master or Old Philosopher) in the sixth century B.C.

(i) **His Book.** To state his philosophy of life Lao Tze wrote the *Tao-Te-Ching*, i.e., the Book of the Way and of Virtue. According to him *Tao* means a Way or Path of Right living or a Way of Nature.

(ii) **Cause of Human Unhappiness.** According to Lao Tze

the cause of human unhappiness in the world is the human selfishness. He pointed out that selfishness created in the life of man unlimited desires which can never be satisfied. Therefore Lao Tze preached selfishness in human life.

(iii) **The Way of Nature or the Universe.** Lao Tze stated that in Nature all the things act in a natural way. The sky, the seasons, the rivers, the stars, etc., act in Natural way and regulate their activity. They work in their own way without the regulation of any body. In their action, the Tao or the Way of the Universe can be traced. To this law (Tao), the law (Tao) of human conduct or life must correspond. This is because the human life in its essential activity is a part of the activity of the world. The life of man will be happy in the world only when the way of human life will correspond to the way of Nature or the universe.

Lao Tze stated that man and other things in the world have been created in the world by Nature. But in the way of living a life, there is a difference between other things and man.

Other things live a life according to Natural Way, i.e., without regulation from any one.

(iv) **The Way of Man's Life.** But men live a life in the world under the regulation of someone. This is because men have acquired knowledge and have not remained innocent. Due to this knowledge, men have invented different things and have made their lives regulated and complicated. On the basis of this they have built up an urban civilization and have made themselves unhappy.

(v) **The Way for Human Happiness.** If now men want happiness, they should give up this regulated and complicated life by retiring to Nature. They should enjoy life of freedom which is without the regulation of any body. If men want to be happy in their instincts and feelings, they must accept the command of Nature. If men are wise, they should not interfere with the Natural course of things. Lao Tze thought that an "Intellectual man" was a danger to the state as he thinks human life in terms of laws and regulations. The regulations of such "intellectual man" destroy freedom and vigour of individuals who are parts of the state. The simple man is not dangerous to the state.

(vi) **An Ideal Ruler.** Such a simple ruler will regulate men

as little as possible. Under him, the nation will be simple and will not follow artificial ways of life.

Lao Tze preached that if there is more legislation, there are more thieves and more poverty in the state. He also told that no one is necessary to transform the people. People themselves will transform and correct their behaviour.

(vii) **Effect of Lao Tze's Philosophy.** This Philosophy of Lao Tze made the Chinese to love complete personal freedom. They wished that the government in China should regulate over the people as less as possible.

(viii) **Taoism.** The teachings of Lao Tze became a religion, **Taoism**, in China in the second century A.D.

(2) **Confucius (551-478 B.C.) and Confucianism.** Confucius was another great philosopher of China in the sixth century B.C.

In his young age Confucius was a teacher and taught the students the subjects like history, philosophy and poetry. He also worked as a Magistrate, Superintendent of Public Works and Minister of Crimes. He gave up these appointments as he found that his superiors or masters were not virtuous persons of character.

(i) **Works of Confucius.** After giving up his jobs, Confucius attempted to give the knowledge of good and ideal life to the Chinese people. For that reason, he edited the books called as the Five Chings. In those books, he stated the ancient rules to form good character. He also stated in them as to how the social order and peace should be maintained. He embodied in those books the principles of ideal human life and morality. The **Five Chings** are also called as the **Chinese Classics**.

In addition to the Five Chings, Confucius also wrote the Four Shu or Books. In those books Confucius stated his philosophy, dialogues and pronouncements.

(ii) **Philosophy of Confucius – Concept of An Ideal Man and An Ideal Society.** In his books Confucius stated that the foundation of the Society is the disciplined individual in a disciplined family. He pointed out that self-development is the root of social development. He, therefore, told the Chinese people that every one of them should try to become an Ideal or Higher man. To become Ideal or Higher men, he advised the Chinese people to seek knowledge and Truth. He counselled them to act im-

partially. He told that every one in the Chinese society should build character and make his conduct faultless.

Confucius pointed out that if a man will improve himself, he will improve his family ; when his family will improve, it will improve the society and the state.

(iii) **Confucius' Philosophy of the Government.** Confucius gave importance to the work of the government. He felt that it should work with an ideal before it.

In the matters of the national life, Confucius felt that the people in the nation are the actual and proper source of political sovereignty. He pointed out that the government which does not have confidence of the people will get destroyed. He said that to win the confidence of the people, the government must be of character and it should have sincerity towards the people. He asked the government in China not to kill the people while carrying out its rule. He advised that to rule over the people impartially, the ruler must appoint persons of character in the government.

(iv) **Effects of His Philosophy.** The philosophy of Confucius gave the Chinese people an idea about their political rights. It also pointed out to the Chinese the duty of the government towards the people.

(v) **Confucianism.** The philosophy of Confucius developed into a religion called as Confucianism in China by 206 B.C. It was the state religion of China during 206 B.C. to 1912 A.D., and it guided the activity of the Chinese government on proper lines. Confucianism also instilled in the Chinese people a love for higher learning. It prompted many of them to undertake an activity to become persons of higher merit.

D. CONSOLIDATION OF CHINA UNDER THE CHIN, HAN AND TANG DYNASTIES AND GOVERNMENT IN ANCIENT CHINA.

(1) **Political Life in China Before the rise of the Chin Dynasty--5000-255 B.C.** (i) **The King.** The thinkers and the people of China regarded that for their political life the monarchical form of the government was the best. They felt that the king was the 'Son of Heaven' and was demi-god on the earth. But they regarded that the king was responsible to the people and it should be his concern to achieve the welfare of his subjects.

The ideas about the king being on these lines, the kings in China were largely not absolute and high-handed. They cared to support merit, virtue, learning and arts.

(ii) **Structure of Government.** The kings in China ruled over the country with the assistance of their nobles. In the course of time, the kings of China gave as semi-independent kingdoms to the nobles the territories which were earlier administered by them. This made China a feudal state.

(ii) **Evils of the Feudal State.** The different feudal semi-independent nobles paid nominal allegiance to the central government and its king. In the internal matters of their administration, they followed the measures of human slavery and forced labour. This made the life of the common man unhappy. Together with this, the semi-independent small rulers spoiled the political atmosphere in China. As they fought wars in between themselves to increase their territory and thereby their political power, they created an atmosphere of political unrest in China. Their internal warfare made China politically a weak and divided country and made its central authority of the king powerless. As a result of this political weakness, the semi-independent governor of the Chin Province (Semi-independent State) defeated the central king, who belonged to the Chou Dynasty in 255 B.C. and established the Chin Dynasty in ancient China.

(2) **The Chin Dynasty (255-206 B.C.).** The Chin dynasty is regarded as the most important dynasty in the history of China. This is because the rulers of that dynasty established for the first time in China, a strong centralized government. That government brought under its control all the semi-independent rulers and gave the territory of China an organized shape of a political state. As a result of this achievement of those rulers, the organized territory under their power came to be called as "China" after the name of their dynasty—the Chin dynasty.

(i) **Shih Hwang Ti (221-212 B.C.).** Out of the important rulers of the Chin dynasty, he was of high merit and great achievements. (a) **End of Feudalism.** Shih Hwang Ti was a strong ruler. He established in China a strong central government after putting down feudalism of the semi-independent rulers. By that he brought political unity in China.

(b) **Administration.** For the territorial reorganization of the Chinese kingdom, he divided it into thirty-six administrative units

called as the provinces. Those provinces were under the strict control of the civil, military and supervisory officials.

(c) **Measures for Good Life.** To lessen internal warfare of the Chinese feudal lords, Shih Hwang Ti caused disarmament in China by melting down weapons. To regularize the economic matters and the course of the life of the Chinese people, he brought standardization in law, and weights and measures. This facilitated inter-state commerce. In 221 B.C. he minted coins and putting an end to the barter economy, introduced monetary economy in China.

(d) **Measures to Defend China.** From the beginning of the civilization, China was constantly attacked by the Hun tribesmen of the Gobi desert. To protect the Chinese civilization from those barbarian people, Shih Hwang Ti constructed the Great Wall of China. This wall was from the seashore near Peking to the desert of Gobi. This Great Wall protected China from the attacks of the Hun people for a considerable period of time. [For the details of the Great wall, see *Architecture in China*.]

As Shih Hwang Ti employed forced labour to carry out the construction of the Great Wall, he was disliked by the subjects.

(e) **Proscription of the Books of Confucius.** Shih Hwang Ti felt that the literature of Confucius encouraged individual liberty and thereby made the people abhor the methods of the centralized form of government. Since Shih Hwang Ti wanted to regulate the course of life in China by strict rules and regulations, he ordered the proscription and destruction of the books of Confucius. The Chinese people hated this action of the emperor and revolted against his decision. Their reaction against Shih Hwang Ti's decision was so great that after his death in 212 B.C., the Chinese people revolted against his successor and brought on the Chinese throne the members of the Han dynasty in 206 B.C.

(3) **The Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-221 A.D.).** The kings of the Han dynasty brought glory and order to China. Out of those rulers emperor Wu-Ti was the most important.

(i) **Emperor Wu-Ti (140-87 B.C.).** He was a strong sovereign whose reign was notable for the conquests of foreign territories and for the establishment of Confucian scholarship in control of civil administration.

(a) **Conquests.** Wu-Ti built up a vast Chinese empire by conquering the territories of Manchuria, Pamir and Korea.

(b) **Administration.** He continued the system of government administration which was installed in China by emperor Shih Hwang Ti of the Chin dynasty. But in contrast to Shih Hwang Ti, Wu-Ti showed great respect for the ideas and teachings of Confucius.

(c) **Appointment of Persons of Character and Merit in Administration.** As Wu-Ti wished to make his government administration efficient and of character on the lines of the ideas suggested by Confucius, he started holding competitive examinations to select persons of merit for his administration. He appointed persons of merit and character as his administrators. To train his officials for civil service, Wu-Ti established a **Grand College**. In that college, the officials were given training in the ideas and principles propounded by Confucius for the work of the government.

(d) **Encouragement to Industry and Trade.** Emperor Wu-Ti took measures to boost the economy of China. He encouraged credit, banking, trade, commerce and industry. He made loans available to the Chinese traders at cheap interest rates. Because of this measure, enthusiastically the Chinese traders conducted trade with distant foreign countries like Persia, India and Parts of Central Asia to earn vast profits. The prosperity which accrued to the Chinese people because of this trade was so great, that the period of the reign of Wu-Ti is regarded as the **Golden Period** of the ancient Chinese civilization.

(e) **Causes of the Fall of the Han Dynasty.** (i) After the death of emperor Wu-Ti in 87 B.C., there did not come on the Chinese throne, capable and strong kings ; (ii) As the Han rulers had followed the bad precedent of the Chou dynasty of granting fiefs to relatives and assistants, the authority of the Central Government gradually declined in China. As a result of this development the weak Han dynasty came to an end in 221 A.D. due to the conquest of China by the Tartars.

(4) **The Tang Dynasty (618-907 A.D.).** After the fall of the Han dynasty, political anarchy prevailed in China during 221-618 A.D. As during this period the Central Government was weak, the Chinese people were at the mercy of the high-handed feudal Lords. Therefore, this period is called as a "Dark Age" in the history of China. This Dark Age came to an end in China when in 618 A.D. King Tei Tsu founded in it the Tang dynasty by defeating the Tartars.

(i) **King Tai Tsu (618-626 A.D.).** He was a strong ruler, who after subduing the feudal lords established a strong Central Government in China. He reorganized the matters of the Central Government. The set-up of the central administration which he developed, prevailed in China until 912 A.D.

(a) **The Tang Government Administration.** The emperor ruled with the assistance of a Grand Council. The Grand Council had in it : (1) the heads of the secretariat; (2) representatives of the ministries of Civil Office, Finance, Ceremonial, War, Justice, and Public Works ; (3) specially appointed dignitaries. There existed the Censor Department to keep a watch on the literary activity of the people. To give justice to the people, there existed a clan court and a criminal high court. There existed under the emperor a flood prevention bureau which reported about its matters directly to the emperor.

The empire was divided into ten districts for supervisory purposes. The districts were under the prefectures. The prefectures were directly under the control of the Central Government.

All the officers were appointed in the government by holding competitive examinations. They were given promotions on the basis of their meritorious performance in the administration.

These measures of Tai Tsu brought political stability and order to China. After his death in 626 A.D., he was succeeded by emperor Tai Tsung.

(ii) **Emperor Tai Tsung (627-649 A.D.).** The reign of emperor Tai Tsung is regarded as important and glorious in the history of China. This is because he increased the territories of the Chinese empire by conquering fresh areas and gave religious toleration and facilities to the people.

(1) **Conquests.** Emperor Tai Tsung conquered the territories of the Eastern and Western Turkestan whose people were a great source of trouble to the civilized life in China. By the conquest of the territory of Turkestan, the people and traders of China got placed in closer contact with the people of Iran and India.

(2) **Religious Toleration.** Emperor Tai Tsung was a ruler of tolerant spirit. As he respected all the religions, he gave facilities to the monks and missionaries of Buddhism, Christianity and Islam to preach and spread their religions in China. In 635 A.D. he

officially welcomed a Nestorian missionary, Alopen, in China and gave him freedom to preach Christianity in his empire.

(3) **Translation of the Sanskrit Works of Buddhism.** In 645 A.D. Hieun Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim, returned to China from a pilgrimage to India. He headed a commission in China which translated 75 Sanskrit books into 1,335 volumes in the Chinese language. As a result of that the Chinese secured detailed knowledge of the original texts of Buddhism.

(iii) **Successors of Tai Tsung.** After the death of Tai Tsung in 649 A.D., the rulers of the Tang Dynasty were weak. That dynasty came to an end in 907 A.D. After that, the rulers who ruled over China, followed the example of the government administration of the Chin, Han and the Tang dynasties.

E. SCIENCE IN ANCIENT CHINA

Like the people of the other Asian civilizations, the people of China took keen interest in the matters of different sciences. As they had a curious mind they inquired into the nature of different substances found in the nature. Their thinking about the principles of different sciences led them to devise new instruments. The study of the following Chinese inventions in the branch of scientific activity clearly proves that the Chinese people were brilliant scientists in the ancient world.

(i) **The Mariner's Compass.** It is an instrument with a magnetic needle which always points the Northern direction. The Chinese scientists invented it sometime during the period 221-610 A.D. This instrument is of greatest use to the sailors who go with their ships in the deep sea waters for the purposes of trade with distant countries. With the help of this instrument since the sailors know the Northern direction, they have no fear to lose their way even in the dark of the night.

(ii) **The Block-Printing Press.** In 868 A.D. the Chinese scientists invented the device of the block-printing press with the help of which it became possible to prepare the blocks of the written text and get it printed into the copies of desirable numbers. This invention facilitated the production of the books on larger scale and thereby helped the spread of knowledge in the wider circle of the Chinese society.

(iii) **The Gun-Powder.** The Chinese scientists invented the gun-powder at an early period of their civilization. The Chinese

people made the use of gun-powder in the firearms when they fought against the attacking Mongols in 1161 A.D.

(a) **Significance of the Chinese Inventions.** Though the Chinese scientists invented the Mariner's compass, block-printing press and gun-powder, they did not put those inventions to effective use. As a result of that the way of the life of the Chinese people did not get altered.

These inventions were learnt by the Arabian people from the scientists of China. From the Arabian people, in the subsequent period those were learnt by the Europeans. When the Europeans put those inventions to effective use, their pattern of life got altered and after 1500 A.D. they became a modern people in the world.

(iv) **Mathematics.** In the science of Mathematics, the Chinese Mathematicians developed Algebra and Geometry. In the 2nd century B.C. Chinese mathematician **Chang Tsang** wrote a work on algebra and geometry. It had in it the first known mention of a negative quantity. Another Chinese mathematician **Tsu Chung-Chih** calculated the correct value of π to six decimal places.

(v) **Other Sciences.** The Chinese people had also developed the sciences of geometry, medicine and astronomy. But their contributions in these sciences were not original. They learnt much of these sciences from India and other ancient countries in the world.

F. ARCHITECTURE AND ART IN ANCIENT CHINA

(1) **Architecture.** The ancient Chinese architects constructed the Pagodas (highly ornamented sacred towers) and the Great Wall of China.

(i) **The Pagodas.** The people of ancient China constructed pagodas (highly ornamented sacred towers) which were used as temples in their different cities and towns.

The pagodas were constructed by the Chinese people as they believed that such structures could "ward off wind and flood, propitiate evil spirits, and attract prosperity". The structure of the pagoda was of the number of uneven stories. This was because the Chinese believed that the even numbers were unlucky. The Chinese builders have built in the ancient times the remarkable



Pagodas were used as temples. The number of stories was always uneven. Elaborate decorations are typical.

Pagodas of the sacred mountain of Sung Shan in Honan, of Peking, etc.

(ii) **Great Wall of China.** This structure which was constructed by emperor Shih Hwang Ti (221-212 B.C.) was regarded as one of the wonders of the ancient world. This wall was of 1500 miles in length. It was from the sea shore near Peking to the desert of Gobi. The height of that wall was 22 feet and its thickness was 20 feet.

At regular distances the Great Wall had vaulted gates and strong square towers. It is regarded as "one of the most impressive of Chinese architectural accomplishments."



The Great Wall consisted of two brick walls, filled in with earth. Every few hundred yards were lookout towers.

(2) **Art.** The Chinese people loved different arts and acquired much artistic skill in the ancient times.

(a) **Relation of Art to Religion In Ancient Civilization of Hwang Ho.** The Chinese artists, though used their art to serve secular matters were not averse to serve religious ideas and beliefs of the religions in China.

The Sculptors in China prepared the idols and statues of Lord Buddha. The painters drew frescoes in the temples to beautify them. Confucius was deeply affected by the frescoes in the Grand Temple at Lo-yang. In the third and the fourth centuries A.D., Buddhism created a theological and aesthetic revolution in China. It became a dominating force in art and introduced in China its symbols, methods and forms. That caused the development of the Chinese Buddhist school of painting which had also upon it the influence of the ideas of Taoism.

(i) **Sculpture.** The Chinese sculptors prepared in the ancient period several bronze works which were decorated with the figures of animals, monsters, lines and different designs. The figures of the deity are called Bodhisatva Avalokiteshwara. Those figures belong to the period of the Tang dynasty.

(ii) **Painting.** The members of the Chinese society held the view that a cultured person should possess a skill in the art of painting. As a result of this the art of painting flourished in ancient China. The Chinese painters of high grade skill produced landscape paintings, scenes of historical events, portraits, etc. Their paintings were highly imaginative and provoked thought and contemplation.

G. ART OF WRITING IN ANCIENT CHINA

The ancient Chinese people had invented their own peculiar art of writing. In about 5000 B.C. the Chinese developed their pictographic script. It had nearly 40000 pictographs. Out of those, 600 pictographs were of basic nature in the Chinese script. That script of the Chinese was so complicated that the Chinese could not develop it to the stage of an alphabet. The Chinese people did not make radical efforts to make their script easy for the writing of an ordinary person in the ancient period, as they were a people of conservative ideas.

Originally the Chinese people wrote on chips of wood with a bamboo pen. For that writing they used liquid ink. Gradually they invented the silk cloth and linen paper for their writing purposes. On those, the Chinese wrote with the help of pictures drawn by the camel-hair painting brush. When paper was invented by the Chinese Scientists in 1st century A.D., the people of China used it for their writing since that time.

H. CHINESE INFLUENCE IN KOREA, JAPAN AND VIETNAM

The Chinese emperors of different dynasties expanded their political authority in other areas by effecting their conquests. As the Chinese hold in those territories got established the conquered people came in closer contact with the Chinese people. Because of that contact, the conquered people learnt many matters of civilization and culture from the Chinese people. Out of such people, the important ones were of Korea, Japan and Vietnam.

(1) **Korea.** (a) **Land.** It is a country extending Southward from Manchuria towards the western tip of Japan.

(b) **People.** The people of Korea were of the Mongolian race.

(c) **Chinese Conquest.** In Korea, post-neolithic civilization came largely from China. As a result of the political upheavals

in China during the reign of the Chou dynasty, a Chou minister migrated to Korea in 1200 B.C. He became the first known ruler of Korea.

(d) **Chinese Colony.** In 193 B.C. the Ki Ja Dynasty was overthrown by the Koreans. When the government of the Korean people obstructed the trade routes between China and Korea, the Chinese emperor Wu-Ti of the Han dynasty of China conquered Korea. For its administration, he established four prefectures (districts) under Chinese administrators. In Korea also developed an extensive Chinese colony.

Though during the period 150-238 A.D. the Koreans rejected the Chinese control, in 238 A.D. the Chinese ruler of the Wei dynasty again conquered Korea. The Chinese rule then lasted in it up to 313 A.D. when the Chinese colonies were extinguished by native states. That made the Chinese colonies disperse in Korea. This resulted in the diffusion of the Chinese civilization all over Korea.

(e) **Effects of Chinese Influence.** The association of the Chinese people with the Koreans resulted in making the Koreans a civilized people. From their contact with the highly civilized Chinese, the Koreans learnt industries, architecture, arts, religion, philosophy and the methods of government administration. Thus the conquest of Korea by China not only planted but fostered human civilization and culture in Korea.

(2) **Japan.** (a) **Land.** The country, Japan, is a group of several islands in the eastern Pacific ocean. It is to the eastern direction of Korea.

(b) **People.** The earliest people of Japan were the Mongolians who had migrated from China, Manchuria and Korea in that country.

(c) **Influence of China.** Japan was greatly influenced by the Chinese civilization and culture in the ancient times.

The Japanese people accepted the script of writing from China. They also borrowed Buddhism from China in the sixth century A.D. Though Buddhism was supported by the king of Japan, it did not supplant the indigenous religion of the Japanese, namely, **Shinto**. This was because the religion **Shinto** was bound up with the myths surrounding the creation of Japan and the establishment of the Imperial dynasty.

The Chinese religion, Confucianism, also found a place in Japan and it profoundly affected the thought and behaviour of the Japanese.

Japan also adopted the practices of the government administration from the Chinese.

Thus the Chinese civilization which was of great merit proved instrumental in guiding the course of civilized life in Japan.

(d) **Shinto—The Religion of Japan.** The original religion of Japan was the “Shinto”. From the sixth century A.D. onwards it got influenced by the doctrines of the Mahayana Buddhism. Therefore in Japan emerged the religious practices which are the product of the commingling of the Shinto and Mahayana Buddhism.

(i) **Early Shinto.** In the early period of Japanese history the people of Japan worshipped the forces of Nature, the Stars, stones, animals, trees, ancestors and the heroes of their clans.

The Japanese celebrated festivals in all villages on certain fixed days to give a feast and to entertain the gods. By that the people of Japan tried to win the favour of the Gods. The Japanese believed that the Gods rewarded the persons of moral and virtuous conduct and punished those who had committed a sin of harming other persons by different means. They laid emphasis upon physical and ritual purity.

(ii) **Mahayana Buddhism in Japan.** From Korea, the Mahayana Buddhism spread in Japan in the sixth century A.D. It proved to be an effective religion in Japan. In Japan, the people worshipped the figure of the Buddha and his attendant Bodhisattvas. The followers of Buddhism started a distinctive and powerful spiritual tradition and a school of Buddhist art in Japan. In the Buddhist temple in Japan, the Japanese also constructed a shrine of the God of the Shinto religion.

(iii) **Shinto.** After the introduction of Buddhism in Japan, the combination of nature-worship, ritualistic observances and ancestor-honouring mythology was given the name of **Shinto**. This was for distinguishing it from the Indian religion Buddhism.

(3) **Vietnam.** The Chinese civilization and culture vastly influenced and moulded the ways of life of the people of Vietnam.

(i) **Land.** Indo-China is a peninsula of southeastern Asia.

Since 22nd May, 1949 A.D., out of its territories got formed the three States—Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. The old name of Indo-China was Cambodia. To its eastern side exists the sea of China. The territory is full of hills and forests.

(ii) **People.** Cambodia and thereby the territory of Vietnam was inhabited by the people from China and Tibet who were of the Mongolian race.

(iii) **Influence of China.** The early history of Cambodia and thereby of Vietnam is uncertain before 111 B.C., when the emperor of the Han dynasty of China, Wu-Ti, conquered it. From 111 B.C. to 939 A.D. that territory remained a part of the Chinese empire.

During 111 B.C.-939 A.D. Cambodia and thereby Vietnam was influenced by the Chinese civilization. The Chinese religions, philosophy, social ways of life and the methods of administration of the government were adopted by the Vietnamese people. On the basis of the matters learnt from the Chinese civilization, the people of Vietnam managed their own government after overthrowing the political domination of China in 939 A.D.

MAIN POINTS

A. THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

(1) **The Land.** China is located along the east coast of Asia. To its Eastern side exists the Pacific Ocean. (2) **The People.** People were of the Mongolian race. People of Mongolia settled in 5000 B.C. in the valley of the river Yangtze, Kiang and Hwang Ho of China.

B. LIFE IN CHINA UP TO THE SIXTH CENTURY B.C. ENLIGHTENMENT

(1) **Social Life ;** (2) **Political Life.** Several semi-independent rulers ruled in China under an emperor. Those rulers fought internal warfare and caused political confusion in China. They followed methods of forced labour and ill-treated the people.

C. SIXTH CENTURY B.C. ENLIGHTENMENT IN CHINA

In the sixth century B.C. arose in China eminent philosophers who gave systems of thought to make the life of the Chinese people an ideal one. (1) **Lao Tze (604-517 B.C.) and Taoism ;** (i) His Book. **Tao Te Ching ;** (ii) **Cause of Human Unhappiness.** The

cause is human selfishness ; (iii) The Way of Nature or the Universe ; (iv) The Way of Man's Life ; (v) The Way for Human Happiness ; (vi) An Ideal Ruler ; (vii) Effects of Lao-Tze's Philosophy ; (viii) Taoism. (2) Confucius (551-478 B.C.) and Confucianism. (i) Works of Confucius ; Five Chings. They are also called as the Chinese classics. He also wrote the Four Shu or Books ; (ii) Philosophy of Confucius—Concept of An Ideal Man and An Ideal Society ; (iii) Confucius' Philosophy of the Government ; (iv) Effects of his Philosophy ; (v) Confucianism.

D. CONSOLIDATION OF CHINA UNDER THE CHIN, HAN AND TANG DYNASTIES AND GOVERNMENT IN ANCIENT CHINA

(1) Political Life in China Before the Rise of the Chin Dynasty—5000-255 B.C. (i) The King ; (ii) Structure of Government ; (iii) Evils of the Feudal State. (2) The Chin Dynasty (255-206 B.C.). (i) Shih Hwang Ti (221-212 B.C.). (a) End of Feudalism ; (b) Administration ; (c) Measures for Good Life ; (d) Measures to Defend China ; (e) Proscription of the Books of Confucius. (3) The Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-221 A.D.). (i) Emperor Wu-Ti (140-87 B.C.). (a) Conquests ; (b) Administration ; (c) Appointment of Persons of Character and Merit in Administration ; (d) Encouragement to Industry and Trade ; (e) Causes of the Fall of the Han Dynasty. (4) The Tang Dynasty (618-907 A.D.). (i) King Tai Tsu (618-626 A.D.). (a) The Tang Government Administration. (ii) Emperor Tai Tsung (627-649 A.D.). (1) Conquests ; (2) Religious Toleration ; (3) Translation of the Sanskrit Works of Buddhism. (iii) Successors of Tai Tsung.

E. SCIENCE IN ANCIENT CHINA

(i) The Mariner's Compass ; (ii) The Block-Printing ; (iii) The Gun Powder ; (a) Significance of the Chinese Inventions. (iv) Mathematics. (v) Other Sciences.

F. ARCHITECTURE AND ART IN ANCIENT CHINA

(1) Architecture. (i) The Pagodas ; (ii) Great Wall of China. (2) Art. (a) Relation of Art to Religion in Ancient Civilization of Hwang Ho. (i) Sculpture ; (ii) Painting.

G. CHINESE INFLUENCE IN KOREA, JAPAN AND VIETNAM

Chinese civilization and culture influenced the life in Korea, Japan and Vietnam. (1) Korea. (a) Land ; (b) People ;

(c) Chinese conquest ; (d) Chinese colony ; (e) Effects of Chinese Influence. (2) Japan. (a) Land ; (b) People ; (c) Influence of China ; (d) Shinto—The Religion of Japan ; (i) Early Shinto ; (ii) Mahayana Buddhism in Japan ; (iii) Shinto. (3) Vietnam. (i) Land ; (ii) People ; (iii) Influence of China.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Give a brief account of the legacy of ancient China.
 2. Write notes on :—
 - (i) Philosophy in ancient China ;
 - (ii) Science in ancient China ;
 - (iii) Shinto ; (B.U. April, 1973)
 - (iv) Teachings of Confucius ;
 - (v) Han Dynasty in China. (B.U. April, 1973)
 3. Describe the main features of the Ancient Chinese Civilization.
 4. Discuss briefly the part played by Shi-Hwang-Ti in China in the development and government of China. (B.U. April, 1973)
 5. Describe the social organization of the ancient Chinese and compare it with the social organization of the Vedic Aryans.
 6. What circumstances did favour the growth of ancient Chinese civilization ? (B.U. April, 1973)
 7. Give reasons for the rise of the Tang empire and mention the salient features of their government. (B.U. April, 1973)
 8. Clarify the relation of art to religion in Ancient Civilization of the Hwang Ho. (B.U. April, 1973)
 9. Discuss the contributions of ancient China to mankind in the fields of Science and Mathematics. (B.U. April, 1973)
 10. Describe the writing materials and script of ancient China and mention the names of main works in that script. (B.U. April, 1973)
 11. What light do the works of Confucius throw on the life of the ancient Chinese ? (B.U. April, 1973)
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OUTLINE

- A. The Land and the People**
- B. Religion in Ancient Persia up to the Sixth Century B.C.**
- C. Prophet Zarathustra and Zarathustrianism**
- D. Persian Empire and its Government Administration**
- E. Decline of the Persian Empire**
- F. Art and Architecture in Ancient Persia**

A. THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

The grassy land to the east of ancient Mesopotamia was inhabited by the people of the Indo-European race in 2000 B.C. Different tribes of those people got organized under their leaders in the form of small kingdom in that territory.

These people called that land in their ancient language as 'Pars'. From that word, the name Persia got derived to denote the country in which they had inhabited. The inhabitants of Persia came to be known in the world as the Persians and their language came to be called as the Persian language.

The modern Persians called that land as 'Fars or Farsistan'. Therefore, the people of that land are known in the world as the Farsi or Parsi people whose language is the Farsi or the Persian language.

Since the Persians called themselves as the 'Aryans' (Noble-men), their land, Persia, was called as 'Ariana' by the Greek geographer, Strabo. The Persians also called their primitive land as "Airyana-Vaejo"—"the Aryan home". From this, ancient Persia came to have another name—Iran and its people came to be known as the Iranians.

Ancient Persia was rich in copper, iron, lead, gold, silver, marble and precious stones. Its soil was fertile for agriculture.

In that land, the tribes of the Persian people lived a simple and vigorous life.

B. RELIGION IN ANCIENT PERSIA UP TO THE SIXTH CENTURY B.C.

(1) **Simple Religion.** The religion of the early Persians or Iranians was of simple practices. They worshipped the Sun (light), Rain (water), Wind, Sky, Earth, and the Fire. They worshipped these natural forces by offering prayers and sacrifices of grains, flowers, milk, etc. They observed a high standard of morality, honesty and uprightness of character. Simple religious ceremonies and practices were not a burden to the common man.

(2) **Complicated Religion.** This simple religious life of the ancient Persians gradually became complicated because of elaborate religious practices when by 700 B.C. they became a settled and prosperous people in Persia.

The worship of the gods of the ancient Persian religion came to be controlled by the Magis (Priests) by the period of the sixth century B.C. No one could make sacrifice without the presence of a Magi. At the time of the performance of the sacrifice, the Magi stood by the side of the person who performed it and chanted the sacrificial liturgy (prescribed prayers). The killing of certain creatures, especially the snakes and birds, was practised by the Persians in the religious matters. The Persians worshipped gods by drinking the intoxicating juice of the haoma herb which largely grew on the mountain slopes in Persia. The people had also started worshipping animals and a multitude of different gods. The Magis lived a rich and leisurely life on the basis of the high fees they charged to the people for the performance of sacrifices and rituals embodied in their worship of different gods. In the sixth century B.C. when the Persians were deviated from the proper religious and moral life, there emerged Prophet Zarathustra in their community who put them on the right path of spirituality and morality.

C. PROPHET ZARATHUSTRA AND ZARATHUSTRIANISM

(1) **Prophet Zarathustra.** It is traditionally believed that in 570 B.C. Zarathustra was born in Media which was a powerful kingdom in Persia. He found that the Persians were not on the proper course of religious and moral life. Since Zarathustra had great love for wisdom and righteousness, he withdrew from the society of men and went in the mountains for meditation. There,

though the evil matters in the world (Devil) troubled him very much, Zarathustra continued his search for the good path in life. Finally, the supreme god Ahura Mazda—the Lord of Light and Wisdom—appeared to him. That god gave the *Avesta* (Book of Knowledge and Wisdom) to Zarathustra and asked him to preach it to mankind.

Zarathustra then returned to the society of men in Media and started preaching his principles of good religious and moral life to the people. His teachings established a new religion in Persia called as the **Zarathustrianism**.

Since the people of Media were orthodox minded people, instead of receiving matters of wisdom from Zarathustra, they ridiculed and persecuted him. Therefore, Zarathustra left Media and migrated to another Persian Kingdom, Anshan. In that Kingdom Zarathustra secured a large following. It is believed the noble hearted and brave king of Anshan, Cyrus II, who founded the Persian empire in the time to come, was greatly influenced by the teachings of Zarathustra. Zarathustra lived a long life. It is believed that in his ripe old age, he was consumed in a flash of lightning and ascended into heaven.

As Zarathustra was called as Zoroaster by the ancient Greek and Roman writers, his religion Zarathustrianism, also came to be popularly known as Zoroastrianism.

(2) **Teachings of Zarathustra (Principles of Zarathustrianism)**. The teachings of Zarathustra were simple and clear for the understanding of the common man. He taught that (i) there is a constant struggle going on between the forces of the Right and the wrong for the mastery of the world ; (ii) Ahura-Mazda, the wise spirit or the God of Wisdom, Light and Heaven, who is supported by all the good spirits (Angels) represents good thought, right law, noble government and immortality ; (iii) opposed to him is Ahriman-Angramanyu, the spirit of evil, filth, falsehood and darkness, who is supported by the evil spirits (Devils) ; (iv) Man, by his free will, must choose between these two forces which are operating in the world ; (v) If a man takes the side of Ahura-Mazda, he is required to work for the cause of Ahura-Mazda (i.e., to make prevail in the world good thoughts, right law, noble government) ; human life in the world will be virtuous and happy, and after his death he will get a place in the Heaven or Paradise, his soul will achieve immortality ; (vi) if a man takes the side of Ahriman-Angramanyu and work for the

cause of Ahriman (i.e., to make prevail in the world filth, falsehood, darkness, etc.), human life in the world will be unhappy, and after his death he will suffer agony in the Hell ; (vii) In the struggle between the two opposing forces of Right and Evil, ultimately forces of Ahura-Mazda (right) will win ; when Ahura-Mazda will achieve complete victory, evil will not exist and everything would be peaceful and quiet in the world.

Thus while giving a nobler aim to the life and action of men in the world, Zoroaster taught them to support and worship only one god--Ahura-Mazda. The teachings of Zoroaster made the ancient Persians a people of nobler action. To make his followers live a nobler life Zoroaster gave them a code of conduct, that is, Zoroastrian Ethics.

(3) **Zoroastrian Ethics.** The code of conduct and morals which Zoroaster gave to the followers of his religion is a detailed but simple one. He told them that "That nature alone is good which shall not do unto another whatever is not good unto its own self". Man's duty, told Zoroaster, is three-fold : "To make him who is an enemy a friend : to make him who is wicked righteous ; and to make him who is ignorant learned." He explained to the followers that the greatest virtues were piety (religious devotedness), and honour and honesty in action and speech. He asked them not to charge interest to the Persians on the monetary loans given to them. Zoroaster directed the Zoroastrians not to worship idols but to worship the Fire, the Sun, who is the most characteristic embodiment of Ahura-Mazda ; Earth, Water and Air as sacred and not to defile the holy elements by burning or burying the dead bodies, but to expose their dead in "Towers of Silence" (open towers) to birds of prey.

The teachings of Zoroaster and the Zoroastrian Ethics which he gave to his followers are written in the Zend (old Persian) language in the book called as the Avesta which is a sacred book of Zoroastrianism. That book is also called as the **Zend-Avesta**, i.e., the sacred book of Zoroastrianism written in the Zend language.

(4) **Importance of Zoroastrianism.** The ideas and concepts preached by Prophet Zoroaster in his religious philosophy and the code of morals which he gave to his followers greatly enlightened the thoughts and the ways of life of the people of Palestine, Arabia, Asia Minor, etc.

(i) The Jews of Palestine borrowed in their religion, Judaism, the ideas of the Hell and the Evil Spirit (to which they called as Satan) from the religious philosophy of Zoroaster. From Judaism, those ideas were taken by Jesus Christ when he preached Christianity. (ii) Prophet Muhammad also accepted those ideas in his religion, Islam. (iii) Teachings of Zoroaster made the Persians a people of upright characters. The Persian kings, Cyrus the great and Darius I, who were under the influence of the ideas and morals preached by Zoroaster, were brave, noble-hearted and tolerant rulers. It is believed that because those rulers were under the influence of the teachings of Zoroaster, they were actuated to give religious toleration, freedom, justice and good government to the people of Persia. Their government administration proved to be the best and efficiently managed administration in ancient Asia.

D. PERSIAN EMPIRE AND ITS GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

(1) **The Median Empire.** Out of the several kingdoms in Persia, the kingdom of the Medes in Media (a part of Persia) was the strongest up to the period of the sixth century B.C. The rulers of that kingdom had conquered the territories of Armenia, Assyria and of Persia after bringing under their control small Persian kingdoms. After this, the Median rulers, who had become powerful and rich suddenly, lived a luxurious life of ease and neglecting the matters of government administration and justice, oppressed their subjects. Seeing the example of the life of their kings the Median nobles and rich men also lived a life of fallen moral standards. This weakened the political power of the Median empire and it was conquered in 550 B.C. by the powerful Persian ruler of the small kingdom of Anshan, Cyrus the Great.

(2) **Rise of the Persian Empire.** In contrast to the life of fallen morals of the people of the Media in the sixth century B.C., the Persian people of a small kingdom of Anshan lived a life of virtue, higher morality and hardihood. The kings of the Achaemenian dynasty, which was founded in the kingdom of Anshan by prince Achaemenes exerted much to attend the public good and make their state superior in military warfare. After capable rulers, Teispes, Cyrus I, Cambyses I and Cyrus II ruled over Anshan and brought to it a spectacular glory.

(a) **Cyrus II or Cyrus the Great (550-530 B.C.).** King Cyrus

He was a talented ruler in the art of military warfare. Training his cavalry in swift movements on the battle-field, he defeated the Median emperor in 549 B.C. and became a master of the vast Median empire. In 546 B.C. he defeated and conquered the kingdom of Lydia and the city states of Caria, Lycia and Ionia which were founded in Asia Minor by the Greeks who had migrated in that territory from Greece. Cyrus II then led his well-trained army against Mesopotamia and conquered it from its Chaldean ruler in 538 B.C. Cyrus the great, who was a follower of Zoroastrianism, was a broadminded man. After the conquest of Mesopotamia, he could have used the services of the people of the Jew tribes of Palestine who were brought for hard work in Mesopotamia by its Chaldean rulers after when they conquered Palestine. But Cyrus the great showed compassion to the Jews and setting them free, he sent them back to their homeland—Palestine. It is believed that he helped the Jews to rebuild the ruined temple of their god, Yehweh, at Jerusalem. After this the Jews reorganized their shattered life and on the basis of the noble ideas and matters which they had learnt of Zoroastrianism while in Mesopotamia, they developed brighter concepts in the philosophy of their religion, Judaism.

Cyrus the great also conquered Bactria and parts of central Asia. His dazzling military career came to an end in 530 B.C., when he lost his life in his warfare against the nomadic tribes of Northern Central Asia.

Thus in a short period of time, Cyrus the great founded a vast empire. It proved to be a great empire in ancient Asia. While founding that empire, Cyrus the great also left an heritage of noble and tolerant conduct for his successors. He not only showed magnanimity towards the Jews but he also respected the religions of other races. He respected the gods of the conquered people and made obeisance in their holy places. He never indulged in the extermination of the conquered people but tried to win their respect by his benevolent conduct towards them. He was of the new spirit of ancient Western Asia and its most gifted and important figure.

(b) **Cambyes (530-521 B.C.).** He was the son of Cyrus the great. In 525 B.C. he conquered and added the territory of Egypt to the Persian Empire. As Cambyes had no heirs to succeed him at the time of his death in 521 B.C., he was succeeded

by Darius, the son of Hystaspes, one of the chief councillors of Cyrus the great.

(c) **Darius I or Darius the Great (521-485 B.C.).** The early years of the reign of Darius the great were spent in pacifying the Persian empire which was torn by the revolts of the conquered people.

(i) **His Empire.** After reconstructing the huge Persian empire once more, Darius I attempted to extend its frontiers in the Eastern and Western directions. He managed to conquer the territories in the Eastern direction up to the Sindhu river in the Punjab in India. In the Western direction, Darius the great managed to add the territories of Central Europe up to the river Danube in his empire. His rule also existed on Macedonia, a part of northern Greece.



The Persian Empire, under Darius, was the largest the world had ever known up to his time. But Persia was never able to conquer the Greeks, although they tried to do so a few years after Darius died.

(ii) **Administration of Darius the great.** To manage the administration of his vast empire was a huge and intricate problem before Darius the great. His subjects were of different civilizations, cultures, religions, races and languages. To give them all a government administration of harmonious methods and practices was a difficult task. But Darius the great being an organizer of the first order and a better practical economist than any king before him succeeded in giving an administration to his empire which proved to be a model even for Alexander the great and the Roman emperors to manage their empires in the

times to come. From the Roman Emperors it was borrowed by the mediaeval and modern European kings.

Darius I set an example of a strong and centralized government controlled by one-man—the king, in Western Asia. The king in the Persian government was the highest authority in the matters of the civil, military and judicial administration. For the efficient management of his empire he made the following arrangement of the administration.

(a) **Division of the Empire.** Darius made himself king of Egypt and Mesopotamia and divided the rest of the territory of his empire into twenty provinces. Each province was called in the Persian language as a Satrapy.

(b) **The Satrap.** Over the administration of a Satrapy, Darius I appointed an efficient governor after testing his qualities and merit. The governor was required to direct the civil and military administration of the Satrapy under him. The governor was called as a Satrap in the Persian language. For his work and duties, the Satrap was responsible to the king, Darius I.

(c) **Checks on the Satrap.** While giving much power to a Satrap in the provincial administration, Darius I took measures to keep him under control and to take adequate steps in time against him if he happened to become a threat to the interests of the king or the empire. (i) To control the military matters of the Satrap, Darius I sent to the province a general of his confidence to command the provincial army. That general controlled the army independently of the governor. Since the command of the active army was in the hands of the general, the Satrap could not grow in military power. (ii) To obtain information about the policy matters and the actions of the provincial Satrap and other officials, Darius I appointed a secretary in each provincial capital. The secretary was required to inform the king regularly about the Satrap and the provincial officials. The Secretary was paid by the king. (iii) To secure a detailed information about the happenings in his empire and about the condition of the life of his subjects, Darius I appointed a special agent known as "The King's Eyes and Ears". That agent was required to travel over the whole empire and was required to keep Emperor informed about the activities of his subjects and the officials. These steps of Darius I maintained the Persian empire intact up to 330 B.C.

(d) **Tolerant Administration.** The administration of Darius

I was tolerant towards the subjects of the Persian empire who happened to be of different languages, laws, customs, morals, religions, etc. All these subjects were allowed to live according to their own matters when they accepted the overlordship of the Persian emperor and paid him tribute.

(e) **Construction of Roads.** To maintain his firm hold on all the parts of his empire and to further the interests of trade and commerce, Darius I constructed good roads. As these roads connected all the provinces of the Persian empire with each other, it became possible for the king to move his army speedily from one province to the other and put down disturbances if they took place anywhere. Similarly, since the cities were connected with each other by the roads, the merchants of the Persian empire could with ease supply different goods to the people of different parts where they were scarce and earn good profits.

(f) **Steps to Increase Seaborne Commerce.** Darius I restored the old canal in Egypt which connected the river Nile with the Red Sea. That canal had become out of use as its repairs were not carried out for several centuries. Darius I carried out its repairs and made it serviceable to the traders to undertake seaborne commerce between Egypt and Persia. Similarly, with the help of that canal, he could easily sail his fleet from the Mediterranean into the Red Sea to protect the long coastline of his vast empire.

(g) **Steps to Make Persia a Great Sea Power.** Darius I was the first Asian sovereign who made remarkable efforts to make Persia a great sea power. It was a difficult task to make the Persians gain control of the sea as they were an inland people who were separated from the water by desert shores. To start the naval activities of Persia, Darius I took the assistance of the Phoenician and Mediterranean sailors. With their help, he got constructed ships for naval warfare and got trained the men of his navy. He also employed the services of a Mediterranean sailor, Scylax, to explore the course of the river Sindhu in India. Darius I got examined through Scylax, the area of the coast of Asia from the mouth of the river Sindhu westward to the eastern coast of Egypt.

(h) **Adoption and Promotion of the Good Matters of Other Civilizations.** Emperor Darius I had great respect for the valuable things in the earlier great civilizations which had become parts of the Persian empire. He adopted some of those things to

manage the matters of his empire. He adopted (i) the **Egyptian calendar of twelve thirty-day months** and introduced it as a calendar of the Persian government, as he thought that calendar to be of practical convenience ; and (ii) the **postal system** of the Assyrian kings of Mesopotamia in all the parts of his vast empire to maintain swift communications with his different officers.

Darius I also promoted the following sciences of the earlier great civilizations. (i) The ancient Egyptians had developed the science of medicine. To impart instructions in medicine, they had started a medical school in Egypt. By the time Persia conquered Egypt, that school had fallen into decay. Darius the great, who knew the value of the practice of medicine in curing diseases, got that school restored and gave it his patronage. Thus he was the earliest Asian king who established the earliest known medical school as a royal foundation. (i) Darius I was also interested in the development of the science of astronomy. He therefore supported the astronomical studies of the famous Chaldean astronomer of Mesopotamia, Naburimannu. Naburimanuu carried out his higher studies at Babylon with the help of the patronage of Darius the great. In the similar manner, another Chaldean astronomer, Kidinnu, could further do research in astronomy because of the help given to him by the Persian Government.

(i) **Wise Taxation Policy.** Darius I had taken steps to give protection to the traders. On the roads and on the sea, he had established patrol posts to protect the interests of the traders and merchants. That made trade and commerce safe in the Persian empire and brought prosperity to the traders. Similarly with the help of his strong army, Darius I protected the subjects of his empire from the attacks of the outside barbarian people. That made the lot of the agriculturists safe and prosperous. Darius I took the advantage of the general prosperity accrued to the people by his wise measures. He got their income assessed properly and fixed his taxes accordingly. As the income of the tax-payers was good, they readily paid high amount of taxes to the Persian Government. Due to this, the Persian Government became the richest government in the ancient world.

(i) **Use of Two Languages in the Government.** The Persian government had its own Old Persian language to maintain its records. Since it had conquered Mesopotamia it was possible for it to impose its Old Persian language on the Mesopotemian people

to maintain government records. But as Darius I was a gentle ruler, he allowed the people of Mesopotamia and other countries, which were in the western part of the Persian empire to maintain records in their own Aramaic language. The people of the eastern part of the Persian empire were allowed by him to use the Old Persian language to maintain government records as they were familiar to it.

The system of the Persian Government was not an entirely new one in ancient Asia. For its structure and work, it had borrowed many ideas from the earlier governments of the Amorites and the Assyrians in Mesopotamia. The Persian Government had also borrowed many ideas for its work from the government in ancient Egypt. There existed many virtues in the work of the Persian Government because it worked under the influence of the principles and philosophy of Zoroastrianism. That religion had taught them that the rulers were responsible to their God and to achieve immortality, they should give a wise, just and pious rule to their subjects. The subjects of the Persian empire were also largely imbued with the same spirit. They generally felt that it was their duty to help their king to manage his administrative matters. The conquered people did not feel hatred towards the Persian Government because it was an efficient government which assured them their property, safety and protection. It also treated them with honour and did not interfere in the matters of their languages, religions, customs, etc. As a result of this, "the great civilizations over which the Persian emperors ruled were merged together in the life of their Empire."

E. DECLINE OF THE PERSIAN EMPIRE

When Darius I was at the apex of his royal power, the Greek city states in Asia Minor revolted against him during 490-494 B.C. This was because they felt the monarchical rule of Darius I as harsh. The establishment of a democratic form of government at Athens in Greece in 500 B.C. also proved to be a contributory factor which actuated the Greek city states in Asia Minor to free themselves from the political domination of the Persian King.

In their revolt against Darius I, the Greek city states in Asia Minor solicited help from the Greek Government of Athens. As the people of Greece were already alarmed by the political advance made by the Persian King in the parts of Europe and Macedonia, to save themselves from the calamity of getting conquered in

future by Persian, the government of Athens rendered military help to the Greek city states of Asia Minor against Darius I. But Darius I subdued all the Greek city states in Asia Minor and put an end to their revolt by 494 B.C.

(1) **The Battle of Marathon (490 B.C.).** Though Darius I became successful in reducing the Greek city states in Asia Minor to obedience, he was much perturbed over the military assistance given to those city states against him by the people of Athens. Therefore, he made up his mind to put an end to the interference of Athens in the matters of his empire and sent an expedition to conquer the mainland of Greece.

The Persian fleet crossed the Aegean Sea and landed at Marathon in 490 B.C. with an intention to conquer Athens. In



A conflict between Greece and Persia was almost inevitable. The Greek cities of Asia Minor were on Persia's borders and she had the choice of being troubled by them more or less constantly or of fighting Greece.

the battle that raged at Marathon between the twenty thousand Persian troops which had won several battles earlier, and the comparatively less experienced ten thousand troops of Athens in warfare, the Athenian troops managed to encircle and defeat the enemy completely. The Persian army then sailed in the boats and tried to capture the city of Athens. But their attempt got foiled

as the victorious Greek army of Marathon had reached earlier than the Persians at Athens to defend that city. This made the defeated Persian army to abandon its attempts to conquer Greece and return to the Persian empire.

Darius the great who was a ruler of the largest empire in ancient Asia and an undisputed master of millions upon millions of people of all races thought his defeat at Marathon as an accidental mischance. He therefore decided to undertake a decisive campaign against Greece. When the preparations for that campaign were in full swing, the mighty conqueror, Darius I, died in 485 B.C.

(a) **Effects of the Battle of Marathon (490 B.C.).** The victory of the Greeks over the Persians in the battle of Marathon proved to be of great importance in the history of the ancient world.

(i) **Athenian Democracy got Saved.** Due to the victory of the Greeks in the battle of Marathon they ruled out the possibility of the rule of the Asiatic monarchy in Greece. If Persia would have become victorious at Marathon, the democratic life and government of the Athenian Greeks would have come to an end. All those people would have become the subjects of the Imperial government of Persia. After the Persian defeat the Greeks were free from the fear of outside political domination and with renewed zeal they made efforts to find out ways and means to make democratic government a success in the world. That gave the world, in the times to come, a new form of government (pure democracy) and an idea to live a free, scientific and progressive life of the well-being of all. As the Greeks had defeated the greatest military power in the ancient world, the victory at Marathon had an invigorating effect on the Greeks. In the future, they became a very confident, assertive and bold people in the history of the ancient world.

(ii) **Persian Empire received a setback.** The victory of the small number of Greek troops over the large number of the Persian troops gave a rude shock to the ancient world in which Persia had enjoyed military prestige. When the conquered people came to know about the defeat of Persia at Marathon, they started revolting against the Persian authority. That made the Persian emperors after Darius I to devote most of their energy to put down those revolts. In the future, those revolts made Persian empire to decline.

(iii) **Superiority of the Men of Aims over Men without an Aim got Established.** Even though the Greek troops were smaller in number than the large number of troops Persia had, the Greek troops became successful at Marathon because they fought the battle with a determined zeal. As they knew that if they will lose before the Persians, their precious and free democratic life would come to an end, the Greek troops faced tenaciously and bravely the fierce attacks of the Persian army and never thought of giving up before the enemy in the battle-field of Marathon. Just as the Greeks had a nobler aim to preserve their heritage and achievement of democracy, the Persian troops did not have any nobler aim before them while fighting against the Greeks at Marathon. The Persian troops were the hired servants of the Persian emperor and they carried out his schemes and orders mechanically and not with any attachment to serve some nobler purpose in life. The lack of a nobler aim to serve partly caused their defeat at Marathon.

(2) **Incompetent and Weak Successors of Darius I.** After the death of Darius the great, there did not emerge in Persia a sovereign of great capability in the military and government matters. The incompetency of the successors of Darius I largely caused the downfall of the Persian empire.

(i) **Xerxes I (485-465 B.C.).** He was the son and successor of Darius I. He was a showy ruler who immersed himself in wine-drinking. But still he persued the aim of Darius I of bringing Greece in the Persian empire. To reduce Greece to obedience when he sent the Persian army, it was defeated by the Greeks on the sea at Salamis (480 B.C.), and on land at Plataea and Mycale (479 B.C.). After these decisive defeats, both on the sea and the land, the Persian emperor gave up his designs to conquer Greece. As a result of the intrigues in his court, Xerxes was murdered in his bed in 465 B.C.

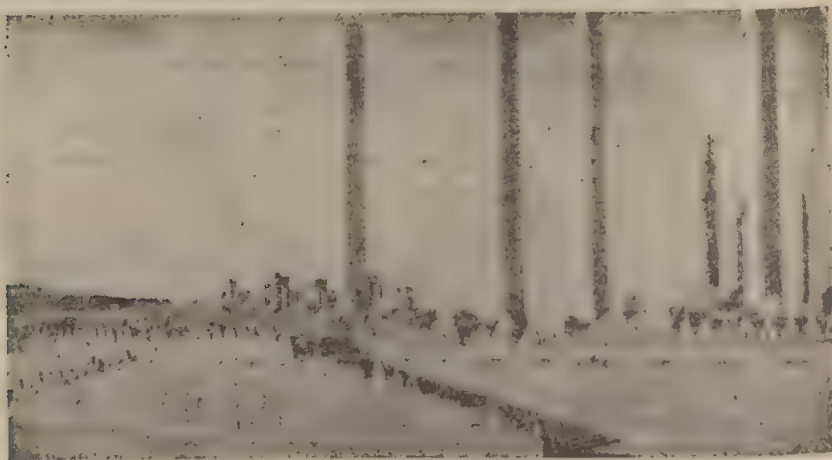
(ii) **Darius III (336-330 B.C.).** After a period of great political confusion (465-336 B.C.), Darius III became the master of the Persian empire. During his reign, there arose a great military leader in Macedonia and Greece. He was Alexander the great. Alexander the great defeated Darius III in the battles of Granicus (334 B.C.), Issus (333 B.C.) and Gaugamela, near Arbela (330 B.C.), and after when Darius III was murdered by his own people, became the undisputed master of the vast Persian empire. After

that Persia became a part of the Hellenistic empire of Alexander the great.

F. ART AND ARCHITECTURE IN ANCIENT PERSIA

(1) **Art in Persia.** In the matters of art the Persian artists were better skilled in the art of sculpture.

(a) **Sculpture.** The Persian sculptors carved out beautiful figures of animals and human beings. They carved beautiful marble figures of the bull to adorn the capitals (tops) of the pillars of the great royal audience hall of the palace which was constructed by Darius I at his capital city, Persepolis. Similarly, the Persian sculptors with great skill prepared the sculptured stairway leading to the royal audience hall of Darius the great at Persepolis. On the walls of that stairway they carved beautiful figures of men and animals.



When Persepolis, the capital of Persia, was unearthed by archaeologists, the beauty of this sculptured stairway leading to the royal audience hall of the palace was revealed. Note the carvings in the stone.

(2) **Architecture in Persia.** In the matters of architecture, the Persian builders learnt much from the people of the other earlier civilizations. On the lines of Chaldean architecture which had developed earlier in Mesopotamia, the Persian architects constructed the palaces of the Persian emperors at Persepolis on vast terraces. Like the Assyrian architects of Mesopotamia, the Persians placed the winged bulls at the palace gates. They also

constructed beautiful and magnificent stairways leading up to the palaces just as the Assyrians used to construct. Like the architects of ancient Egypt, the Persian architects constructed ranges of connected columns (vertical shafts for the support of a roof) stretching along the front and filling the enormous halls. As was used in the Egyptian architecture, the Persian architects made the use of a horizontal block of stone, called a lintel on the top of each door in the palace of Darius I. Thus the Persian architecture was made up of the different good architectural matters followed by the people of the other earlier civilizations.

MAIN POINTS

A. THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

The grassy land to the east of ancient Mesopotamia came to be known as Persia and its people were known as the Persians.

B. RELIGION IN ANCIENT PERSIA UP TO THE SIXTH CENTURY B.C.

(1) **Simple Religion.** Persians worshipped the Natural forces by offering prayers and sacrifices of grains, flowers, etc. Religion was not a burden to common man.

(2) **Complicated Religion.** By 700 B.C. Persians became a settled people in Persia. By 600 B.C. the worship of gods came to be controlled by the Magis (Priests). Sacrifices could be offered to the gods only with the help of the priests. People worshipped gods by offering animal sacrifices and by drinking an intoxicating drink. When people were deviated from the proper religious and moral life, there emerged Prophet Zarathustra in Persia in the six century B.C.

C. PROPHET ZARATHUSTRA AND ZARATHUSTRIANISM

(1) **Prophet Zarathustra.** He was born in 570 B.C. in the kingdom of Media in Persia. Finding that the Persians were not on the proper path of religious life, Zarathustra went in the mountains and after meditation, secured the Avesta (Book of knowledge and wisdom) from the supreme god, Ahura Mazda, the Lord of Light and Wisdom and started preaching it to mankind. His preaching established a new religion Zarathustrianism in Persia. Since the people of Media ridiculed and persecuted Zarathustra, he migrated to another Persian kingdom, Anshan. King Cyrus of Anshan who founded the Persian empire became his follower.

Since Zarathustra was called as Zoroaster, his religion,

Zarathustrianism, also came to be popularly known as Zoroastrianism.

(2) **Teachings of Zarathustra (Principles of Zarathustrianism).** Teachings simple and clear. (i) Constant struggle is going on in the world between the forces of the Right and the Wrong ; (ii) Ahura Mazda, the wise spirit, or the God of Wisdom Light and Heaven, who is supported by all the good spirits (Angels) represents good thought, right law, noble government and immortality ; (iii) Opposed to him is Ahriman-Angramanyu, the spirit of evil, fifth, falsehood and darkness, who is supported by all the evil spirits (Devils) ; (iv) Man must choose between these two forces ; (v) If a man takes the side of Ahura Mazda, human life in the world will be virtuous and happy, and after his death his soul will achieve immortality in the Heaven ; (vi) If a man takes the side of Ahriman, human life in the world will be unvirtuous and unhappy, and after his death he will suffer agony in the Hell ; (vii) In the struggle between the forces of the Right and the Evil, finally the forces of Ahura Mazda will win, everything will be peaceful and quiet in the world.

Thus Zoroaster taught the Persians to worship only one God, Ahura Mazda, and to live a virtuous life. He also gave them a code of conduct to live a nobler life.

(3) **Zoroastrian Ethics.** Zoroaster asked his followers to give honourable treatment to others ; follow honesty in conduct ; observe morality ; not to worship idols, etc. Teachings of Zoroaster and the Zoroastrian Ethics are written in the Zend (Old Persian) language in the book called as the Avesta.

(4) **Importance of Zoroastrianism.** Ideas, concepts and the code of morals preached by Zoroaster greatly enlightened the life of the people of Palestine, Arabia, Asia Minor, etc. (i) The Jews borrowed from Zoroastrianism the ideas of the Hell and the Evil. From Judaism, those ideas were taken up by Christianity ; (ii) In Islam also those ideas were accepted ; (iii) Persian kings like Cyrus the great and Darius the great, who were influenced by Zoroastrianism, gave religious toleration, freedom, good government, etc., to their subjects.

D. PERSIAN EMPIRE AND ITS GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

(1) **The Median Empire.** Up to the sixth century B.C. the Kingdom of Media built up a vast empire in Persia by conquering

other Persian kingdoms. Due to its riches, its people and kings lived a life of fallen morals, complicated religion. That made the Median empire weak.

(2) **Rise of Persian Empire.** In contrast to the people of Media the people of the kingdom of Anshan were virtuous and hard-working. Kings of Anshan like Teispes, Cyrus I, Cambyses I and Cyrus II were capable rulers who made Anshan a powerful state.

(a) **Cyrus II or Cyrus the Great (550-530 B.C.).** The defeated Median emperor in 549 B.C., conquered the kingdom of Lydia and Greek city states of Caria, Lycia and Ionia in Asia Minor in 546 B.C. In 538 B.C. conquering Mesopotamia, he liberated the enslaved in it by its kings. He also conquered Bactria and parts of Central Asia. Died in 530 B.C. after founding the Persian empire ; was a tolerant ruler who respected the gods of the conquered people. (b) **Cambyses (530-521 B.C.).** Conquered Egypt in 525 B.C. (c) **Darius I or Darius the Great (521-485 B.C.).** Put down revolts. (i) **His Empire.** Conquered territories up to the Sindhu river in the Punjab in India and up to the river Danube in Central Europe. Also conquered Macedonia and a part of Northern Greece. (ii) **Administration of Darius the great.** Darius the great was an organizer of the first order and a better practical economist than any king before him. Therefore the administration which he established in his empire proved to be a model even for Alexander the great and the Roman emperors. From the Roman emperors it was borrowed by the Mediaeval and Modern European kings. Darius I's government was headed by one-man, the king. The king controlled all its matters. (a) **Division of the Empire.** Had twenty provinces. (b) **The Satrap.** Appointed by the king as the head of the provincial administration. (c) **Checks on the Satrap.** Not to allow the Satrap to grow in power Darius I appointed (i) a general of his confidence to control the provincial army independently of the Satrap ; (ii) a Secretary in every provincial capital to secure information, and (iii) Special agent known as "**The King's Eyes and Ears**" to secure information of his entire empire. These steps of Darius I maintained the Persian Empire intact up to 330 B.C. (d) **Tolerant Administration.** Persian Government allowed the subjects to live according to their religions, customs, etc., if they paid tribute to the Emperor. (e) **Construction of Roads.** To maintain firm hold on the parts of his empire and to create facilities for trade.

Darius I constructed roads to connect all the provinces. (f) **Steps to Increase Seaborne Commerce.** Darius I restored the old canal in Egypt to promote seaborne commerce. (g) **Steps to make Persia a Great Sea Power.** Darius the great was the first Asian king to take steps to make Persia a great sea power. With the assistance of the Phoenician and Mediterranean sailors he developed the Persian navy. Through Scylax, Darius I got examined the area of the coast of Asia from the mouth of river Sindhu to the coast of Egypt. (h) **Adoption and Promotion of the Good Matters of Other Civilizations.** Darius the great had great respect for the valuable matters of the earlier great civilizations. He adopted (i) the Egyptian calendar, and (ii) the postal system of Assyrian kings of Mesopotamia. He also promoted the following sciences of the earlier great civilizations. (i) The science of medicine of ancient Egypt, and (ii) the science of astronomy of ancient Mesopotamia. (i) **Wise Taxation Policy.** After assessing the income of the subjects, Persian administration levied its taxes. As the subjects were protected and made prosperous by the measures of the Persian emperor, they paid high amount of taxes without any grudge. (j) **Use of Two Languages in the Government.** For the convenience of the people of Mesopotamia, Darius I allowed them to maintain government records in their own Aramaic language. To the people of the eastern part of his empire, he allowed the use of the Persian language.

There existed many virtues in the work of the Persian Government because it worked under the influence of the principles and philosophy of Zoroastrianism.

E. DECLINE OF THE PERSIAN EMPIRE

Feeling the monarchical rule of Darius I as harsh, the Greek city states in Asia Minor, which had been earlier conquered by the Persian kings, revolted against him during 499-494 B.C. They were helped in that revolt by the Greek Government of Athens. Darius I put down that revolt. (1) **The Battle of Marathon (490 B.C.).** As Darius I was perturbed over the military assistance given to the Greek cities in Asia Minor by the Greeks of Athens against him, he sent an expedition to conquer Athens in 490 B.C. But his vast troops were defeated by the small number of the Greek troops in the battle of Marathon (490 B.C.). When Darius I was preparing once again to fight against Athens, he died suddenly in 485 B.C. (a) **Effects of the Battle of Marathon.** (i) Athenian Democracy got saved. (ii) Persian Empire received

a setback. (iii) Superiority of the men of Aims over men without Aim got established. (2) **Incompetent and Weak Successors of Darius I.** (i) **Xerxes I** (485-465 B.C.). In his efforts to conquer Greece, he was defeated by the Greeks at Salamis (480 B.C.) and Plataea and Mycale (479 B.C.). (ii) **Darius III** (336-330 B.C.). He was defeated by Alexander the great. Persian empire came to an end in 330 B.C.

F. ART AND ARCHITECTURE IN ANCIENT PERSIA

(1) **Art in Persia.** (a) **Sculpture.** Persian sculptors carved out beautiful figures of Animals and human beings to decorate pillars of the building structures. (2) **Architecture in Persia.** Persians adopted the construction technique from the Egyptian, Assyrian and Chaldean builders and constructed big palaces.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Write notes on :—

- (a) Organization of the Persian Empire under Darius the Great ;
 - (b) Zoroaster ;
 - (c) Main tenets of Zoroastrianism ;
 - (d) The Effects of the Battle of Marathon ;
 - (e) Architecture in ancient Persia.
2. Give a brief account of the legacy of Ancient Persia.
 3. Describe the cultural achievements of Ancient Persia.
 4. Discuss briefly the part played by Darius the great in Persia in the development and government in Persia.

(B.U. April, 1973).

OUTLINE

- A. The Land—Palestine and Its People
- B. Settlement of the Jews in Palestine
- C. The united Hebrew Kingdom
- D. The Two Hebrew Kingdoms—Israel and Judah
- E. Destruction of Israel and Judah (721-586 B.C.)
- F. Palestine and the Hebrews after the Babylonian Captivity
- G. Literature of the Hebrews

A. THE LAND—PALESTINE AND ITS PEOPLE

(1) **The Land—Palestine.** Palestine is a small country situated on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean sea. In the ancient



In the tiny country of Palestine two great spiritual movements began, Judaism and Christianity.

period, the country, Phoenicia, existed to its northern side. To the eastern and southern side of Palestine exists the desert of Arabia. The country Palestine acquired its name in the ancient times because of the settlement of the people called as the Philistines in it. The Philistines were the people of the island of Crete in the Mediterranean Sea. They migrated from Crete to the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea and establishing a nation on it, called it as "Palestine" after their own name.

As Palestine is having the sea and the desert surrounding, much of its area is largely unproductive. Only some of its parts are rich and productive. In those parts, which are dependent upon the winter rainy season for moisture, agriculture can be undertaken by the people in a measurably good way.

(2) **Palestine's People—The Hebrew or The Jew or The Israel.** Though Palestine was inhabited by several groups of people, its Hebrew people developed in it a brilliant civilization and religion in the ancient times.

As in the Aramaic language (a branch of Semitic family of languages) the wandering people were called as "eberai", the wandering people who settled in Palestine in 1400 B.C. acquired the name as the **Hebrew people**.

The Hebrew people are additionally known as the "Jews". The name 'Jew' is derived from 'Judah'. The Jews were originally descendants of Judah, the fourth son of Jacob and Leah.

The Hebrews or the Jews are also known as "Israel" as they are supposed to be the children of Abraham's sons Isaac and Jacob, whose names were changed to "Israel", i.e., "Defenders of God".

B. SETTLEMENT OF THE HEBREWS IN PALESTINE

The Hebrew or the Jew or the Israel people are of the Semitic race and it is believed that they migrated to Palestine from the territory of Arabia. They formed a small part of numerous groups of nomadic peoples who wandered from the regions of northern Arabia into various parts of Asia.

(1) **Abraham.** It is believed by the Jews that "the tribal founder of the Jews", Abraham, led the Jews in Palestine and after defeating its earlier settlers, conquered some of its parts for the settlement of his tribe some four thousand years ago.

Abraham continued in Palestine his own religion of the wor-

ship of god Jehovah who had promised him the land of Palestine. He did not abandon it by getting influenced because of the religious practices of the conquered people in Palestine.

(2) **Isaac.** Abraham, after his death, was succeeded by his son Isaac. He was a kind Jew leader who gave good treatment even to his enemies.

(3) **Jacob.** After the death of Isaac, Jacob, whose surname was Israel, became the leader of the Jews in Palestine. Jacob had twelve sons. Each of these sons became a founder of one of the twelve tribes of Israel.

(a) **The Egyptian Conquest and Slavery.** When the Jews were developing their civilized life they were conquered by the Egyptian Pharaoh Thutmos III (1501-1447 B.C.) in 1479 B.C. By that, Palestine became subject to the Egyptian rule. In that, according to the Bible account, the Jews were driven from Palestine by famine into Egypt. Though at first they were favoured by the Egyptian rulers, they were later enslaved and ill-treated by the Egyptians.

(4) **Moses (C. 1225-1200 B.C.).** From the Egyptian slavery, the Jews were freed by their ruler, Moses, after conducting a revolt in Egypt. He, then, led the Jews to their promised land, Palestine, which was earlier conquered for them by their tribal founder, Abraham..

(a) **The Exodus.** This Exodus (the departure from Egypt of the Jews led by Moses), stated in the Second Book of the Old Testament (First book of the Bible of Christianity), went on for a period of forty years.

Moses led the Jews to Palestine, not by a regular way, but by devious (winding) ways. It is believed that when he was with his people in the neighbourhood of the Sinai Mountain in the Sinai Peninsula (at the northern end of the Red Sea), he was probably joined by other tribes of their blood. At that place, Moses made them all enter into a solemn pact or covenant by giving them the **Ten Commandments or The Law of Moses.**

(b) **The Ten Commandments or The Law of Moses.** These commandments (orders or laws) were as follows : (i) To worship only one God, Jehovah, who was abstract and beyond every form and image ; (ii) To love one's neighbour as one would love his one's self ; (iii) To observe the seventh day of the week (Satur-

day) as a day of rest and worship ; (iv) To honour one's parents ; (v) Not to steal ; (vi) Not to commit adultery ; (vii) Not to kill ; (viii) Not to give false witness against one's neighbour ; (ix) Not to covet (desire) the wife of one's neighbour ; and (x) Not to covet the goods (belongings) of one's neighbour.

It is believed that god Jehovah gave these commandments to Moses.



This is an artist's conception of Moses holding the tablets of law. He is wearing a tallith, or prayer shawl

(c) **Importance of The Ten Commandments.** The acceptance of the Ten Commandments made the Jew people worship only one god, Jehovah. That virtually welded them into one nation under the sole authority of Jehovah. The Ten Commandments not only regulated the moral and social life of the Jews, but also made them a united and determined political force in the world. [See Also F. (2)].

(d) **Death of Moses (C 1200 B.C.)** After uniting the different tribes of the Jews, Moses led them on their way to Palestine, the land of their forefather, A'rahim. The several Jew tribes, which were welded into a religious confederacy, were further

welded by many bitter experiences during a long experience together on their way to Palestine. When they reached the area of the Dead Sea, they lost their great general and leader, Moses who died in C. 1200 B.C.

(5) **Joshua.** After the death of Moses, Joshua gave the required leadership to the Jews to reach Palestine and conquer some of its parts from the Canaanite people who had established their political hold on it during the period for which the Jews were in Egypt. After rehabilitating the Jews in some of the parts of their promised land, Palestine, Joshua died in C. 1180 B.C.

(6) **Era of the Judges (1180-1050 B.C.).** After the death of Joshua, the responsibility of governing the tribes of the Jews fell upon men who came to be known as the Judges. These Judges to whom the tribes of the Jews gave united obedience were tribal chiefs, warriors and priests who had already revealed their capacity as leaders, warriors and deliverers. They were extremely devoted to the cause of their god, Jehovah, and their people of the Jew tribes.

These Judges acted as arbitrators of disputes and guided the Jew people in the matters of their life. The experience of good life developed by the strong and just Judges, led the Jew people develop an idea to have a King to rule over them just as the other people in the world had. Together with this, during the closing years of the Era of the Judges (1180-1050 B.C.), in Palestine migrated the people called as the Philistines from one of the Aegean islands. They were a highly civilized and skilled people in warfare. The Jew leaders or the Judges found it difficult to unite the Jew people into a nation against them. Therefore the Judges decided to institute a Jew King in Palestine.

C. THE UNITED HEBREW KINGDOM

(1) **Saul.** To unite the Jew people, the Judges selected their first king whose name was Saul. While fighting against the Philistines, Saul lost his life.

(2) **David (1012-972 B.C.)** After King Saul, one of his army men, David, became the king of the Jews. He, being a capable ruler, brought under his control all the Jew tribes of Palestine. Defeating the Philistines, David ruled over a vast Hebrew kingdom. He had great ability and skill in the matters of warfare, singing and poetry. After his death he was succeeded by his son, Solomon.

(3) **Solomon, the Wise (972-932 B.C.).** As King David had effected the unification of the Jews, had founded the city of Jerusalem and had vanquished the enemies, Solomon could have a prosperous reign. Solomon gave good law and order to his subjects. As he assured peace to his subjects and ruled over them with his shrewd administration, his capital city, Jerusalem, became one of the wealthiest cities in the Near East. The Jews conducted a busy and prosperous trade with Phoenicia during the period of his reign. He also completed the construction of the temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem which was first conceived by King David. That temple was constructed by Solomon with the help of the Phoenician workmen.

For the construction of that rich temple, King Solomon needed vast amount of money. To procure it, he imposed heavy taxes upon his Hebrew subjects. The burden of his taxation was so great that shortly after his death which took place in 932 B.C., in 930 B.C., the tribes of Northern Palestine preferred to withdraw from the nation and set up a kingdom of their own. This divided the Hebrew nation into two kingdoms. The kingdom established in Northern Palestine was called as "Israel" and of Southern Palestine was called as "Judah".

D. THE TWO HEBREW KINGDOMS—ISRAEL AND JUDAH

There did not exist friendly relations between the people of Israel and Judah. This was because the ways of the life of the people of those kingdoms were different from each other.

(1) **Causes for the Conflicts.** (i) **Difference in the Ways of Life.** Whereas the kingdom of Israel was rich and prosperous because of its industries and commerce and rich agriculture, the kingdom of Judah was poor in agriculture and industry. The people of Israel were wealthy and lived in towns. But the people of Judah lived a simple life and wandered with their flocks.

This difference in the ways of the life of their people generated conflicts between the kingdom of Israel and Judah. The conflict between them in the religious matters was of a serious nature.

(ii) **Difference in the ways of Worship.** After defeating the Canaanite people, the people of the kingdom of Israel had developed a religious practice of worshipping the Canaanite gods

which existed in every city. This they did as the Canaanites were their neighbours in the cities. But due to that they became unfaithful to their old Hebrew God, Jehovah. In that the rulers of Israel ruled over the people in an unjust and high-handed manner. The people and thinkers of the kingdom of Judah hated and disliked the ways of life followed by the members of Israel and fought with them many times. This warfare made both the Hebrew States politically weak.

(2) **Rise of the Hebrew Nabis or Prophets.** Nabi is the Hebrew term for a prophet. The word Nabi developed in the Hebrew language from the Arabic word *naba'a*. In Arabic *naba'a* means "announce." From it got derived the word "**nabi**." Nabi, therefore, is an 'announcer' or a 'spokesman', a man who has a message to deliver or a certain communication to make. Such an 'announcer' or a 'spokesman' was also known as a prophet. The prophet was not conscious of speaking of his own authority, but rather as the instrument of a superior. He felt that he was "the mouth of God." Taking an impartial view of the evil and degenerated conditions of life in the society, politics, economy and religion which prevailed around them, the prophet showed the people the right course of virtue and conduct by announcing true principles of morality, human relations and noble life. Such persons—prophets—arose in the Hebrew community when a crisis arose in its life because of conflicting ways of life followed by the people of the state of Israel and Judah.

(i) **Prophet Elijah (C. 895 B.C.).** He was a holy man who preached against the practices of idol worship practised by the Jews. He also criticised the high-handed and unjust methods followed by the rulers of Israel to rule over their subjects. He pointed out to the people the evils which got generated in the Hebrew society because of the exploitation of the poor by the rich. He tried by the example of his life to lead his people into righteousness.

(ii) **Prophet Amos (C. 750 B.C.).** He was a shepherd who lived a simple life. He criticised the ungodly luxury of the mighty and the oppression of the poor, which was present in the Hebrew society. He denounced the showy clothes and fine houses of the rich who lived corrupt life and gave harsh treatment to the poor. He condemned the rich who seized the lands of the poor when they could not repay their debts. He, like Elijah, asked the

Hebrews to live a simple and virtuous life by giving up the evil practices they were following in the social relationship and religion.

When the Hebrew prophets were pointing out to their people the way toward "unselfish living, brotherly kindness and a higher type of religion" and the rich and powerful members of the Hebrew society were reluctant to follow their advice, the kingdoms of Israel and Judah got overwhelmed politically.

E. DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH (721-586 B.C.)

(1) **Destruction of Israel (721 B.C.).** The Hebrew prophets had announced the destruction of the kingdom of Israel because of the evil lives of its people. Their prophesy proved to be true. The Assyrian King Sargaon II conquered Israel in 721 B.C. He deported to Mesopotemia the 27,000 Hebrews who belonged to its Ten Tribes. Those people vanished from the historical scene and no information about them is available after their deportation to Mesopotemia.

(2) **Development of a New Religious Philosophy in Judah.** The annihilation of Israel by Assyria proved to be a shocking event in the life of the Jews of the kingdom of Judah. When the national hopes of the Jews were centred in the small kingdom of Judah in the critical time after the fall of Israel, they developed a feeling that the Assyrians were superior to them in the military and religious matters. They developed a sense that Assur, the god of the Assyrians, is superior to their own god, Jehovah, and due to this finally they will experience a doom at the hands of the **Assyrians**.

(a) **Prophet Isaiah (about 700 B.C.).** When several doubts prevailed in the minds of the Jews about their destiny and about the power of their god, Jehovah, in their community arose prophet Isaiah who gave them courage and optimism.

(i) **Jehovah the God of the World.** He told the Jews that Jehovah ruled a kingdom far bigger than their country, Palestine. Jehovah ruled over the world; and in the world not Assur but Jehovah was the supreme god.

(ii) **Jews punished for their wrong doings.** He also explained to the Jews the cause by which Israel experienced destruction at the hands of the Assyrians in 721 B.C. He told them that the Assyrians destroyed Israel because they were but the lash

(whip) in the hands of Jehovah, who was using them as an instrument to punish the Hebrews for their wrong doings.

(iii) **Bright Future for the Jews.** As at that time the people of Judah were expecting an attack of the Assyrian ruler Sennacherib on them, Prophet Isaiah proclaimed a great and bright future for the Jews and a disaster for the Assyrians.

After this, miraculously, the Assyrian army which was in Egypt at that time and which was expected to attack Judah on its way back to Assyria, was struck by some pestilence. Without attacking Judah, it went back to Assyria from Egypt. As the expected Assyrian danger got averted, the people of Judah sensed a hand of God in the prophesy of Prophet Isaiah and they started thinking that their god, Jehovah, was ruling over a larger world than Palestine.

In accordance with the prophesy of the Prophet Isaiah, the Jews also saw that the powerful Assyrian rule about which they entertained fear, was overthrown by the Chaldean rule in Mesopotamia in 612 B.C. The Jews rejoiced over the fall of the Assyrians.

(3) **Destruction of Judah (586 B.C.).** But shortly after the fall of Assyria, when the Jews were hoping for a peaceful and progressive life a calamity fell on them. The smaller kingdom of Judah, whose descendants the modern Jews are, was conquered by king Nebuchadnezzar of the Chaldean dynasty in Mesopotamia, in 586 B.C. He destroyed the temple of Jehovah which was at Jerusalem.

He sent the conquered Jews of the kingdom of Judah to Babylon, his capital city in Mesopotamia, to work as slaves. These enslaved Jews remained in Mesopotamia during 586-538 B.C. They were released from the bondage of slavery by the Persian King Cyrus the great when he conquered Mesopotamia in 538 B.C. after defeating the Chaldean dynasty.

The period of the enslavement of the Jews of Judah in Mesopotamia, that is 586-538 B.C., is known in their history as the "Babylonian Captivity". Thus got wiped out both the kingdoms of the Jews—Israel and Judah.

(a) **"Babylonian Captivity" of the Jews (586-538 B.C.).** The Babylonian captivity of the Jews is regarded as a most important event in the religious history of mankind.

Though the Jews lost their political freedom, and it was the most cruel and unfortunate happening in their life, because of their association with the highly developed Babylonians, they derived different advantages. (i) From the Babylonians, who had developed industries, the Jews learnt industrial skills when they worked as slaves in those industries ; (ii) The enslaved Jews who worked in the construction of buildings, acquired knowledge and skill in the matters of architecture ; (iii) The Babylonian captivity of the Jews coincided with the establishment of a vigorous religion of Prophet Zarathustra, Zoroastrianism, in Persia which had a close border with Mesopotemia. From the teaching of Prophet Zoroaster, the enslaved Jews in Mesopotemia learnt the ideas of the Hell, Heaven, and that life is a struggle in the world and that the final victory is that of the proper ways of religious and virtuous life. Due to it, the faith of the Jews in the prophesy of their prophets that they will have good {days in life became firmer ; (iv) The severe misery and suffering which the enslaved Jews experienced in Mesopotemia led them to think inwardly about their lapses in religious and moral life. This developed a thinker in them whose thoughts are recorded in the Old Testament. That thinker, name is not recorded anywhere, told the enslaved Jews in Mesopotemia that "Jehovah was the creator and sole God of the Universe. Suffering and affliction were the best possible training and discipline to prepare people for service. By afflicting the Jew People, Jehovah was only preparing His suffering people for service to the world and that he would yet restore them and enable them to fulfil a great mission to all men." Due to these ideas and thoughts of a hopeful life in the future, the enslaved Jews bore patiently the pangs of a life of slavery during the period of their Babylonian captivity. The encouraging attitude to look towards life which that unknown thinker developed in the mind of the enslaved Jews made them go to their promised land, Palestine, with a heart full of hope and optimism, to reconstruct their shattered life after when they were freed from the Babylonian captivity by Cyrus the great in 538 B.C.

F. PALESTINE AND THE HEBREWS AFTER THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

After 538 B.C. the Jews returned to their promised land, Palestine. With a stout heart they undertook the task of rehabilitating their religion and the temple of their god Jehovah at Jerusalem.

They succeeded in completing the construction of that temple in 516 B.C. with the support and goodwill of the Persian Emperors, Cyrus the great and Darius the great.

The Jew leaders also put down together their old religious laws. These laws are revered by the Jews even in the modern times. Because of the putting down of the old religious laws together, the ancient religion of the Jews called as **Judaism** got established in Palestine.

(1) **Judaism.** There is a distinction between the religion of the ancient Hebrews and the religion of the Hebrew prophets.

The ancient Hebrews practised polytheism and in their worship of the gods of the neighbouring nations regarded their god Jehovah as a great god. Due to the practices of Polytheism, the ancient Hebrews often fell short of the moral standard to live a higher life of virtue.

When the Jews faced calamities in life due to the following of wrong practices, their prophets like Moses, Amos and Elijah gave them guidance to live a higher moral life. The following principles which they voiced out for proper or true religious life form the core of Judaism.

(i) Jehovah is the **One True God** ; (ii) His wish is that man should treat his fellow-men with righteousness and justice ; (iii) Jehovah preferred a pure heart to sacrifice ; (iv) Punishment would follow unrighteousness ; (v) Jehovah loves those who obey him and are of right conduct ; (vi) To inaugurate a reign of Universal Righteousness in the world, there will emerge a **Messiah**, a Saviour for his people ; (vii) To follow the **Ten Commandments** or the **Law of Moses** faithfully.

As the **Ten Commandments** are believed to have been given by god Jehovah to prophet Moses and they form the basis of Judaism, Judaism is regarded as a revealed (communicated authoritatively by divine agency) religion.

(2) **Importance of Judaism.** Judaism proved to be a very effective religion to guide the course of moral life in the desert of Arabia, Palestine and Asia Minor. Many matters of Judaism, especially its **Ten Commandments** or the **Law of Moses** gave proper direction to human conduct in those parts of the world. When in a simple, clear and understandable manner it gave direction to the people of those areas of matters they were required to do

and the commission of which they were to avoid in life, many points of doubt in the minds of those people got resolved and they started living life on a firm footing of morality and virtue.

The significance of the Ten Commandments in the religious history of mankind is tremendous. While initiating his religion, Christianity, Jesus Christ adopted it and Prophet Muhammad, who founded Islam, adopted the spirit and the contents inherent in the Ten Commandments.

G. LITERATURE OF THE HEBREWS

After their return from Mesopotamia to Palestine in 538 B.C. the Hebrews or the Jews reconstructed their shattered life.

They did not revive the institution of kingship in their new way of life. Instead of having a king to rule over them, they decided to have a High Priest at Jerusalem to act as a ruler. This made the Jewish State a religious organization as the Head of the Jewish Church also became the Head of the Political State.

The leaders of this church collected and put together the old writings, speeches, orations and addresses of the earlier Hebrew prophets. These formed the body of inspired scriptures of Judaism which grew from the Law of Moses to the Old Testament.

(i) **The Old Testament.** Of the two parts of the Bible of Christianity, the first one is called as the Old Testament and the second as the New Testament.

In the Old Testament, there are thirty-nine small books put together. These books have been written by a number of religious men of the religion of the Jews.

In those books we get historical data to construct the history of the Hebrew people who lived in the world before Jesus Christ. That data make us able to reconstruct the religious, political, social and economic life of the Hebrew community.

In the Old Testament are stated the precious spiritual ideas of the thinkers and prophets of the Hebrew religion. Those ideas give us the knowledge that "the Hebrews believed that God had a universal moral law for all the world. There are standards of right and wrong which God expected all men to obey. They thought that God spoke to them through **Prophets**, who warned them to turn from their evil ways and to obey God's will."

All such ideas of spiritual value are presented in the Old Testament by their writers in simple, clear, lucid and forceful

style. Because of that even an ordinary member of the Hebrew community could follow their essence correctly. This did much to raise the moral standards of the individuals and the communities since the time those ideas got known to the people.

The Old Testament has in it beautiful Psalms (sacred songs) which are full of poetry. They depict the thirst of their authors to see God.

The Old Testament also has proverbs in it. Those proverbs, which are in simple and clear language, imparted wisdom and knowledge to the people about the virtuous and sensible matters of life.

Since the Old Testament is so much rich in its contents, it is regarded as "one of the greatest and most beautiful pieces of literature produced by any people of any time."

MAIN POINTS

A. THE LAND—PALESTINE AND ITS PEOPLE

(1) **The Land—Palestine.** Palestine is a small country situated on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean sea. Its land is largely unfertile. (2) **Palestine's People—The Hebrew or The Jew or The Israel.** Due to the considerations of their ways of life, worship of the god and their ancestor, the people of Palestine are known as the Hebrew or the Jew or the Israel people.

B. SETTLEMENT OF THE HEBREWS IN PALESTINE

The Hebrew people of Semitic race who dwelt in Arabia migrated to Palestine. (1) **Abraham.** Jews believe that "the tribal founder of the Jews", Abraham, led the Jews in Palestine and conquered some of its parts for their settlement. (2) **Issac.** (3) **Jacob.** (a) **Egyptian conquest and slavery.** (4) **Moses (C. 1225-1200 B.C.).** He freed the Jews from the Egyptian slavery and led them to their promised land, Palestine. (a) **The Exodus.** It means the departure of the Jews from Egypt led by Moses. When the Jews were near the Sinai Mountain, Moses made them all enter into a solemn pact of covenant by giving them the Ten Commandments or The Law of Moses. (b) **The Ten Commandments or The Law of Moses.** It is believed that god Jehovah gave these commandments to Moses. (c) **Importance of The Ten Commandments.** The Ten Commandments made the Jews worship only one god, Jehovah, and welded them into one nation under his sole authority. (d) **Death of Moses (C. 1200 B.C.).** (5) **Joshua.** After Moses, Joshua be-

came the leader of the Jews and rehabilitated them in some of the parts of Palestine after defeating the Canaanite people. Joshua died in C. 1180 B.C. (6) **Era of the Judges (1180-1050 B.C.)**. After Joshua, the responsibility of governing the tribes of the Jews fell upon men who came to be known as the Judges. Their rule was good but to unite the different Jew tribes into a nation to fight against the enemies the Judges decided to institute a Jew King in Palestine.

C. THE UNITED HEBREW KINGDOM

(1) **Saul**. He was the first Jew King selected by the Judges. (2) **David (1012-972 B.C.)**. Brought under his control all the Jew tribes of Palestine. (3) **Solomon, the Wise (972-932 B.C.)**. Effected the unification of the Jews ; founded the city of Jerusalem; brought peace and prosperity to his people ; constructed at Jerusalem the temple for Jehovah which was first conceived by David ; for that levied heavy taxes. Therefore after his death, in 930 B.C. the tribe of Northern Palestine preferred to withdraw from the nation and set up a kingdom of their own. This divided the Hebrew nation into two kingdoms—Israel in the North and Judah in the South.

D. THE TWO HEBREW KINGDOMS—ISRAEL AND JUDAH

There did not exist friendly relations between the people of Israel and Judah. (1) **Causes for the Conflicts**. (i) **Difference in the ways of Life**. People of Israel were prosperous due to industries ; people of Judah were poor as the land of Judah was unfruitful. (ii) **Difference in the Ways of Worship**. People of Israel worshipped the gods of the conquered people along with Jehovah. Rulers of Israel were unjust. Therefore the people of Judah regarded them as unfaithful in religious matters and fought wars with Israel. That made both of them weak politically. (2) **Rise of the Hebrew Nabis or Prophets**. Hebrew prophets showed the people the right course of virtue and conduct by announcing true principles of morality, human relations and noble life. (i) **Prophets Elijah (C. 895 B.C.)**. Preached against idol worship, unjust rule of the kings and the exploitation of the poor by the rich. (ii) **Prophet Amos (C. 750 B.C.)**. He asked the Jews to live simple and virtuous life by giving up idol worship and exploitation of the poor.

When the prophets were pointing out to their people the way of unselfish living, brotherly kindness and higher religion, the States of Israel and Judah got overwhelmed politically.

E. DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH (721-586 B.C.)

(1) **Destruction of Israel (721 B.C.).** Assyrian King, Sargoon II, conquered Israel in 721 B.C. and deported the members of the Ten Tribes of Israel to Mesopotamia. They vanished from the historical scene. (2) **Development of a New Religious Philosophy in Judah.** People of Judah developed the idea that the god of the Assyrians, Assur, is superior to their own god, Jehovah. They also felt that they will be destroyed by the Assyrians. (a) **Prophet Isaiah (about 700 B.C.).** He removed the doubts from the minds of the people of Judah by giving them courage and optimism ; (i) **Jehovah—the God of World ;** (ii) **Jews Punished for their Wrong doings ;** (iii) **Bright Future for the Jews.** When Isaiah was preaching these ideas, the Assyrian troops, whose attack on Judah was expected, were struck by some pestilence and Judah got saved. The Assyrian King was also defeated by the Chaldean people in 612 B.C.. (3) **Destruction of Judah (586 B.C.)** When the Jews of Judah were feeling safety due to the fall of Assyrian rule, they were conquered by the Chaldean ruler Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. He destroyed the Temple of Jehovah of Jerusalem and sent to Babylon the conquered Jews as slaves. (a) **“The Babylonian Captivity” of the Jews (586-538 B.C.).** It is a most important event in the religious history of mankind. The Jews learnt in it industry and architecture from the Mesopotemians and the religious ideas of Zoroastrianism from the Persians. Due to their miserable life the Jews thought over their conduct of religious lapses. This gave rise to a thinker in them who gave them the idea that their god Jehovah was the Creator and sole God of Universe. He told that by making them suffer, Jehovah is preparing the Jews for service to the world and he will restore them in Palestine. This proved to be true as in 538 B.C. the Jews were set free by Cyrus the great when he conquered Mesopotamia.

F. PALESTINE AND THE HEBREWS AFTER THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

After 538 B.C. the Jews came back to Palestine and at Jerusalem constructed the Temple of Jehovah. As they put down together their old religious laws there got established the ancient

religion of the Jews, **Judaism**, in Palestine. (1) **Judaism**. The principles voiced out by the Hebrew prophets of the worship of one God, Jehovah ; virtuous and moral conduct ; punishment for sinful activity ; a hope for the coming of a Messiah in the world to inaugurate the reign of Universal Righteousness, and the contents of the Ten Commandments form the core of Judaism. (2) **Importance of Judaism**. It guided the course of moral life in Palestine, Arabia and Asia Minor. Jesus Christ in Christianity and prophet Muhammad in Islam adopted the spirit and the contents of the Ten Commandments.

G. LITERATURE OF THE HEBREWS

After 538 B.C. the Hebrew leaders put together in Palestine the old writings, speeches, orations and addresses of the earlier Hebrew prophets. These formed the body of inspired scriptures of Judaism which grew from the Law of Moses to the Old Testament. (i) **The Old Testament**. It is the first part of the Bible of Christianity. It has thirty-nine small books which give the history of the Hebrews earlier to the period of Jesus Christ. In it are also found the rich songs and proverbs to impart knowledge and wisdom to the people.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Write notes on :—

- (i) The Babylonian Captivity of the Jews ;
- (ii) Legacy of the Hebrews ;
- (iii) The Ten Commandments ;
- (iv) Judaism ;
- (v) Moses and Judaism. (B.U. April, 1973).

2. Give a brief historical background, and assess the contribution of the Ancient Hebrews.

OUTLINE

- A. Phoenicia and the Phoenicians
- B. Phoenician Industries and Trade
- C. Invention of the Alphabetic Script
- D. Invention of the Phoenician Star
- E. Transmission of Knowledge
- F. Building of the Ports and Colonies
- G. Legacy of Phoenicia

Like the big countries, some small countries also played a significant role in the ancient age to develop human civilization by transmitting its contents and knowledge to the people of lesser developed countries in the world.

Out of such people, the Phoenicians of ancient Phoenicia were the most important.

A. PHOENICIA AND THE PHOENICIANS

The country known in the ancient world of Phoenicia situated between the Eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea and the Western edge of the Lebanon mountains in Asia Minor. It was to the Northern side of ancient Palestine.

This land, whose length was 120 miles and the width was 20 miles, was inhabited by the people called as the Phoenicians (because of their red complexion) by the ancient Greek historians.

That land acquired the name Phoenicia, after the name of its inhabitants, the Phoenicians (the people of red complexion).

Though, due to the mountain and the sea surrounding the land of Phoenicia was unfertile, the Phoenician people, who probably belonged to the Arabian deserts, preferred to settle in it in 2200 B.C. because of the access of that area of the Cedar trees whose wood is fragrant and durable in quality.

B. PHOENICIAN INDUSTRIES AND TRADE

In the absence of the possibility of easy agriculture, the Phoenicians made their living possible in Phoenicia on the basis of the Cedar wood and the sea surrounding. The Phoenicians managed different industries and pursued a vigorous sea borne trade with the distant countries in the world.

(i) **Phoenician Industries.** The Phoenicians were a very industrious people. By their resolution, hard work and skill, they developed an elaborate structure of their industries.

They managed the industries which produced pottery, glass-wares, and weapons of copper and bronze. Their skilled workers managed the industry of jewellery. The Phoenician craftsmen manufactured beautifully coloured and embroidered cloth. The Phoenicians were the only people in the ancient world who manufactured the Purple Dye which was in great demand in other countries.

(ii) **Phoenician Trade.** With the help of their manufactured articles, the Phoenicians conducted a vigorous sea-borne trade in the distant countries of the world. They had trade contacts in Cyprus, Aegean Islands, Crete, South Greece, Egypt, North Africa, Sicily, South France, Spain, Britain, Palestine, Mesopotemia, Persia and India.

The Phoenicians sold their commodities in those countries and brought to Phoenicia, copper, Cyprus wood, iron and gold from Cyprus, wine from France, ivory and gold from North Africa, cotton and papyrus from Egypt, carpets from Persia and spices and precious stones from India.

With the help of the above imported goods from different countries, the Phoenicians produced variety of manufactured goods and sold those in other countries. This not only provided employment to most of the Phoenicians but also brought immense prosperity to Phoenicia. The task of the management of those industries made the Phoenicians one of the highly skilled craftsmen in the ancient world.

The prosperous Phoenicians constructed huge private and public buildings and castles. In the art of the construction of the buildings, the Phoenician workers were so much skilled that their help was sought to construct buildings by King Solomon (973–933 B. C.) of Palastine and King Nebuchadnezzar (604–561 B. C.) of Mesopotemia.

C. INVENTION OF THE ALPHABETIC SCRIPT

The Phoenicians, whose trade was vast, were required to maintain detailed accounts of the transactions with other people. They, therefore, struggled to find out an easy method of writing. With their attempts in that direction, they evolved from the Egyptian script a script of 22 alphabets.

The knowledge of the easy alphabetic script gradually spread in the countries with which the Phoenicians traded. Out of the people of those countries, the people of Greece, the Greeks, after adopting the alphabetic script of the Phoenicians added 4 vowels e, i, o, u, in it and developed a script of 26 alphabets. Through the Greeks, gradually that script of 26 alphabets got known to the people of entire Europe. With its help, common men could practise the art of writing. The growth of human ideas and literature in the world became speedier after when the Phoenicians invented the easy script for the writing of the common man. That achievement of the Phoenicians had made their name immortal in the history of mankind.

D. INVENTIONS OF THE PHOENICIAN STAR

In the ancient times the countries of Western Asia had not invented the Mariner's compass. In the absence of the instrument, it was not possible for the sailors to undertake distant voyages in the waters of the rough sea. They also used to fear about losing their way towards their country, in the absence of any device of knowing the direction by which their ship was sailing.

The Phoenician sailors overcame this difficulty by locating the Polar or Northern star which is at a fixed position in the sky in the Northern direction. On the basis of its position, the Phoenician sailors could know the Northern direction for their ships in the dark of the night and could travel safely to distant countries in the rough sea without any fear of missing their way towards their homeland.

The Phoenician knowledge about the fixed position of the **Polar or Northern Star** spread in the countries with which the Phoenicians conducted trade. The sailors of those countries also undertook distant voyages on the basis of the knowledge of the **Polar or the Northern Star**.

Since the Phoenicians were the first people in the world to invent the Northern or the **Polar Star** of a permanently fixed position, that star came to be known in the world after the name of the Phoenician, as the **Phoenician Star**.

E. TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE

As the Phoenicians often visited the countries of advanced civilizations in the ancient world, they learnt the sciences, arts, architecture, etc., from their people. The Phoenicians absorbed that stock of knowledge in their life.

This stock of knowledge, which they had learnt from other civilizations the Phoenicians transmitted to the people of the distant countries with whom they traded. As a result of this activity of the Phoenicians; the knowledge about their art of writing, the knowledge of the weights, bas-sculpture, measures, mythology, etc., of Mesopotamia ; science, religion, architecture, sculpture, industry of pottery, ornaments, etc., of Egypt spread in the distant countries of the world like Spain, France, Britain, Italy and Sicily. On the basis of that stock of knowledge of different civilizations, the people of those countries made a beginning of their civilized life in the world.

Since the Phoenicians played a role of transmitting the knowledge developed by different civilizations to the people of the backward ways of life in the ancient age, they are regarded as a very important people in the history of human civilization. In the days of the absence of the means of communications in the ancient world, the Phoenicians served the cause of human civilization through their trade. Their trade proved to be a vehicle through which human knowledge travelled in the distant countries.

F. BUILDING OF THE PORTS AND COLONIES

For the development of their trade with distant countries, the Phoenicians constructed ports like Byblos, Acre, Beirut, Tyre Sidon, etc., on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

As the Phoenicians were brave and ambitious sailors, they undertook the activity of establishing their colonies and settlements in the other countries of the world.

They founded their settlements at Cadiz in Spain and colonies in Sicily and North Africa. Those settlements and colonies made the Phoenicians as the first sea-borne empire builders of the ancient world.

Out of the colonies of the Phoenicians, the colony in North Africa, called as "**Carthage**", was founded by them in 800 B.C. It dominated the entire trade conducted in the Mediterranean Sea. It became a serious rival of the ancient Roman republic and was subsequently defeated by the Romans in the Punic (Carthagian) wars (264-146 B.C.)

G. LEGACY OF PHOENICIA

The Phoenicians had dominated the sea-borne trade of the ancient world.

Besides their invention of the alphabetic script for writing and the discovery of the Phoenician Star, they served a valuable cause of spreading the knowledge of the advanced civilizations in the backward countries of the ancient world.

Phoenicia was finally conquered by the Romans in 64 B. C. After that, the Phoenicians went to Palestine and got absorbed in the Jew community.

MAIN POINTS

A. PHOENICIA AND THE PHOENICIANS

Ancient territory in Asia Minor inhabited by the Phoenicians (people of red complexion) was known as **Phoenicia**. It was unfertile.

B. PHOENICIAN INDUSTRIES AND TRADE

As in the unfertile land of Phoenicia, agriculture was not possible, Phoenicians took to industry and trade.

(i) **Phoenician Industries.** Pottery, metal weapons, glasswares, purple dye, etc. (ii) **Phoenician Trade**—with distant countries like India and Britain, with Mesopotamia, Egypt, Cyprus, Greece, France, etc. Trade made the Phoenician prosperous.

C. INVENTION OF THE ALPHABETIC SCRIPT

From the Egyptian script, evolved an alphabetic script of 22 alphabets, it was easy, was learnt by the Greeks, Greeks invented and added 4 vowels :e, i, 'o, u' in it and gave us the modern script of 26 alphabets to write in English language.

D. INVENTION OF THE PHOENICIAN STAR

For not missing the way in the dark of the night in the rough sea, Phoenicians discovered the **Polar or Northern Star** of fixed position. It is also called as the **Phoenician Star** after the name of the Phoenicians and it served the sailors to know the direction of their ships in the absence of the Mariners' compass.

E. TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE

What knowledge the Phoenicians learnt from the other ancient civilizations, they transmitted it to the people of different countries with whom they had trade.

F. BUILDING OF THE PORTS AND COLONIES

For trade, Phoenicians built ports of Sidon, Tyre, Byblos, Acre, etc., on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, they also established overseas colonies of Carthage in North Africa, Sicily, and settlements in Spain.

G. LEGACY OF PHOENICIA

Phoenician contributions of the **alphabetic script** and the **Phoenician Star** helped the countries in the ancient world to effect their progress.

TEST QUESTIONS

(1) Write notes on—

(i) The Phoenicians ;

(ii) Role of the Phoenicians in the Ancient world.

(2) What is the main contribution of the Phoenicians to the civilization in Asia ?

(B. U. April, 1973)

OUTLINE

- A. Palestine at the Time of the Birth of Jusus of Nazareth
 - B. Jesus Christ and Christianity
 - C. The Religious and Moral Principles of Christianity
 - D. Consequences of the Teachings of Jesus Christ
 - E. The Spread of Christianity
 - F. Importance of Christianity
-

**A. PALESTINE AT THE TIME OF THE BIRTH OF
JESUS OF NAZARETH**

(1) **The Birth of Jesus of Nazareth.** The Gospel which is one of the four books of the New Testament gives information about the life of Jesus of Nazareth who came to be known as the Christ (Savior) because of his religious teachings. New Testament is the second part of the Bible, which is a sacred work of Christianity.

According to the historical scrutiny of the contents of the Gospel, it is gathered that Jesus of Nazareth, who became the founder of a new religion, Christianity, was born on December 25, 4 B.C. at Bethelhem which is near Jerusalem in Palestine.

During that time the condition of the life of the Jews in Palestine was not good.

(2) **Political conditions in Palestine.** The Jews of Palestine had lost their political freedom as that country was conquered by the Romans in 63 B.C. Palestine, from that time, had become a part of the Roman empire. That had brought a change in the political life of the Jews. Instead of having the rule of the High Priest of Jerusalem, they had now the rule of the governors appointed by the Roman Senate. The Roman governors, though they were good administrators, sometimes acted in the way by which the religious sentiments of the Jews were hurt. They

incurred displeasure of the Jews at times by carrying the standards of the Roman legions having the emperor's image on them into the Holy city, Jerusalem; and by using some of the temple treasure to carry out public works in that city.

(3) **Social Life in Palestine.** In Palestine, in the society of the Jews human inequality existed. The rich people of that society were selfish and gave inferior and harsh treatment to the poor.

(4) **Religious Life in Palestine.** In the religious practices of Judaism, the Jews followed costly rituals and performed animal sacrifices to please God. When these matters were done by the Jews after paying heavy fees to the priests, the priests became wealthy. The wealthy priests looked down on the common Jews with scorn. Thus the religious life in Palestine was not pure and simple as it should have been.

B. JESUS CHRIST AND CHRISTIANITY

(1) **John the Baptist.** John the Baptist was the son of a priest of Judaism in Palestine. He did not like the political, social and religious life of the people of Palestine. He felt that it was in contrast to the simple and pure religious life which the Jews were expected to follow according to the Ten Commandments.

John the Baptist, who wanted to make the followers of Judaism live according to the Ten Commandments, condemned the priests of Judaism who were of hypocrite conduct and who ill-treated the poor people. Similarly, he criticized the rich people of loose morals and warned the sinners that they would be made to suffer by God on the Day of Last Judgement.

Like some other Jew people of that time, John the Baptist felt that a Messiah (a liberator) would emerge in their community to liberate the Jews from the Roman rule, the hypocrite priests and the rich people of loose moral life.

(2) **Jesus of Nazareth.** Jesus of Nazareth, who got reared up in that society, did not like the hypocrisy of the priests of Judaism in the matters of ritual and worship. He was a sincere and pious man who regularly attended the synagogue (a place of meeting for Jewish worship) and listened to the scripture with great spiritual interest.

(a) **Jesus Baptist by John the Baptist.** John the Baptist who was preaching a reform in the practices of Judaism was

attracted by the insight of Jesus of Nazareth in the essence of the principles of Judaism. As Jesus was a person of sensitive and humane nature, John the Baptist thought that he was the proper person to lead the cause of reformation of Judaism in Palestine. Therefore, he baptised Jesus of Nazareth and proclaimed him as the Messiah.

Sometime after this event, John the Baptist was imprisoned by the Roman Governor of Palestine. John the Baptist was considered as a dangerous prophet, and therefore was beheaded by the government.

After the death of John the Baptist, the responsibility of carrying out the purification of the religious life of his people fell on the shoulders of Jesus of Nazareth. To prepare himself well to shoulder that responsibility, Jesus retired to the wilderness like Gautama Buddha and Zoroaster and returned with the definite ideals on which his faith is based. On entering Jerusalem, Jesus was acclaimed as Messiah by the large number of its inhabitants who had followed John the Baptist and had intimidated the religious and government authorities in Palestine.

When Jesus preached the ideals of his firm belief in human relationship and purity in religious life to save the people from their fall in morals, they called him as the Christ, that is, the Saviour (one who saves or rescues). As a result of this, the religion which he preached came to be known as Christianity, that is, a religion which saves the people from a fall in their moral life.

C. THE RELIGIOUS AND MORAL PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIANITY

After finding out a true and real religion, Christianity, Jesus Christ preached its religious and moral principles to the people. He preached that (i) God is one and is in the Heaven and He loves all the human beings ; (ii) He is the Father of all the human beings ; (iii) Therefore all men should behave with each other as brothers ; one should love his neighbours ; (iv) They should help the sufferers ; (v) All should follow virtuous and pure way of life and should not live an immoral life ; (vi) Those who are humane, humble and merciful, are good people and they will get a place in the Heaven on the Day of Last Judgement ; (vii) The wrong-doers will get a place in the Hell ; (viii) Charity should be done with the desire to help the needy and not with a desire to gain fame ; (ix) Instead of hating enemies one should love them ;

by this method only they will be conquered ; (x) Wealth should not be earned to have pleasure on its basis, it is never lasting but vanishes at any time ; (xi) All should protect themselves from the hypocrite religious priests ; (xii) Service done to human beings is service done to God ; (xiii) One should repent for his misdeeds and should try to avoid their occurrence again ; (xiv) One should not worship idols ; (xv) Peacemakers are the true children of God ; and (xvi) If all lived life according to the above principles, kingdom of God shall be established on the Earth.

Jesus Christ declared that he had come not to annul (extinguish or destroy) but to fulfil the Law of Judaism and asked his followers to give strict following to the Ten Commandments. Thus Christianity arose as a seat of Judaism in Palestine.

D. CONSEQUENCES OF THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST

(1) **People got the knowledge about proper matters in life.** The teachings of Jesus Christ proved to be effective in making the people of Palestine know what was proper and what was improper in their religious and moral life.

(2) **Jews no longer a chosen people.** Up to the time of Jesus Christ, the Jews entertained an idea that they were the only chosen people of the God. When Jesus Christ preached that all the human beings in the world irrespective of their races and nations were the children of the God, the Jew people developed an idea to think about their religion in terms of the entire world. Their vision and ideas which were focused on a small country of Palestine, became broad and took the view of the entire world and the humanity.

(3) **Priests of Judaism got affected adversely.** As Jesus Christ expressed views against the sacrifices, festivals and rituals, and preached simplicity of life, the followers of Judaism started giving up the observance of those matters. As a result of that, the hypocrite priests started losing their income. They also lost their influence and position in the society. Therefore the priests of Judaism thought ill about Jesus Christ.

(4) **Adverse view taken by the Roman Administration.** As Jesus Christ recognized God in the Heaven and asked others to worship him and not anybody else, it meant that he and his followers were not to worship the Roman Emperor as God. According to the practices of the Roman empire and its religious practices,

the subjects under the Roman rule were required to show their faithfulness to the Roman Empire by worshipping the Roman Emperor as God. When the teachings of Jesus Christ went against the practices of the Roman Empire, the Roman government took an adverse view about Jesus Christ.

(5) **Crucifixion of Jesus Christ (30 A.D.)** As the popularity of Jesus Christ and his teachings increased and made an appeal to the sentiments of downtrodden men, the Jew priests brought pressure upon the Roman Governor of Palestine, Pontius Pilate, to arrest Jesus Christ and conduct his trial. In the trial a charge of sedition was levelled against Jesus Christ and his crucifixion (death by nailing to a cross) was ordered. Accordingly, Jesus Christ was crucified in 30 A.D.

E. THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY

(1) **The Twelve Apostles.** While preaching his religion, Christianity, Jesus Christ had singled out from his followers, twelve persons whom we call his apostles, to be closely associated with him and to train to go on with his work.

(2) **Saint Paul.** Out of the twelve apostles of Christ, Saint Paul is the important most in effecting the spread of Christianity in the different parts of the Roman empire. Saint Paul travelled widely and taught the principles of Christianity to the people of different cities in the Roman empire. In the cities he visited, he established Christian churches to give the knowledge of Christianity to their inhabitants. He was put to death in 67 A.D. by the Roman government who took adverse view about his religious activity. Due to the exertions of Saint Paul, Christianity became a well-established religion.

(3) **Saint Thomas.** Next to St. Paul, Saint Thomas is the important apostle of Jesus Christ in the matter of spreading Christianity in the world.

According to a legend of 250 A.D., it is gathered that St. Thomas came to India to spread Christianity. He converted to Christianity **King Gondopharnes** (19-45 A.D.), and many members of the royal family. Gondopharnes belonged to the Parthian dynasty and ruled over the portions of land in North Western India.

It seems that after spreading Christianity in North Western India, St. Thomas came to South India and died at Madras (Mylapore) while doing his missionary work of spreading Christi-

anity. It was due to his exertions that Christianity became one of the religions of ancient India.

(4) **Work of other Apostles and Priests.** After the death of Saint Paul, other apostles and the priests of the churches of Christianity did the work of spreading the religion of Jesus Christ in the masses and gave them the knowledge of pure moral life. The teachings of Christ were liked by the people of a harassed lot like the slaves and small traders. In the earlier part of the spread of Christianity, the poor people of the Roman empire largely became its followers. As a result of this, in the 1st century A.D. Christianity spread in Palestine, Asia Minor and Italy. In the 2nd century A.D., it spread in Carthage (North Africa). In the 3rd century A.D. Christianity spread in all the parts of the Roman empire. Taking into account the popularity and the moral force of Christianity, the Roman emperor, Theodosius I, in 392 A.D. declared it as an official religion of the Roman empire.

(5) **Religious Administration of Christianity.** While effecting the spread of Christianity, its missionaries and priests developed the following structure of its religious administration.

(i) In a village the followers were attached to a church which was under a clergy. (ii) In a city the followers were attached to a church which was under a Bishop. (iii) All the clergies of the villages and the Bishops of the cities in a province were under the charge of an Archbishop. (iv) The Archbishops of all the provinces were under the authority of the Patriarch (Pope=Papa) of Rome who was the supreme authority in the matters of Christianity.

Because of this well-knit organisation, Christianity worked as an effective missionary religion and secured a large number of followers in the times to come.

F. IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIANITY

The principles of Christianity which Jesus Christ taught in simple and clear language could be understood easily by the people. The appeal which he made to the people to follow morality and the principle of the human brotherhood made them improve their conduct towards others. As a result of the teachings of Christ the tone of moral life improved in different parts of the world.

MAIN POINTS

A. PALESTINE AT THE TIME OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS OF NAZARETH

(1) **The Birth of Jesus of Nazareth.** Jesus of Nazareth was

born on December 25, 4 B.C. at Bethelham in Palestine. (2) **Political conditions in Palestine.** Palestine was under the Roman rule. The Roman Governors ruled in Palestine without caring for the religious sentiments of the Jews. (3) **Social Life in Palestine.** In the society of the Jews, human inequality existed and the rich gave harsh treatment to the poor. (4) **Religious life in Palestine.** Jews had given up the simple ways of the worship of the God ; they followed costly rituals and performed animal sacrifices by paying heavy fees to the priests. Because of this the priests became a wealthy people. They ill-treated the poor people.

B. JESUS CHRIST AND CHRISTIANITY

(1) **John the Baptist.** He did not like the political, social and religious life of the people of Palestine which was in contrast to the contents of the Ten Commandments. He criticized the hypocrite priests and the rich of high-handed conduct towards the poor people. John the Baptist felt that a Messiah would emerge in their community to liberate the Jews from the Roman rule and to improve their religious life. (2) **Jesus of Nazareth.** He also did not like the hypocrisy of the priests of Judaism in religious matters. He was a pious and sincere man. (a) **Jesus Baptised by John the Baptist.** John the Baptist who was preaching a reform in the practices of Judaism was attracted by the insight of Jesus in the religious matters and thought him to be a proper person to lead religious reformation in Palestine. Therefore, he baptised Jesus and proclaimed him as the Messiah. Shortly after this, John the Baptist was beheaded by the Roman government and the responsibility to carry out the work of religious reformation fell on the shoulders of Jesus. When Jesus preached the ideas of human relationship and religious purity to save the people from their fall in morals, they called him as the Christ.

C. THE RELIGIOUS AND MORAL PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIANITY

After finding out a true and real religion, Christianity, Jesus Christ preached its religious and moral principles to the people. He asked the people to worship only One God ; follow the principle of human brotherhood ; follow the Ten Commandments ; etc.

D. CONSEQUENCES OF THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST

- (1) People got the knowledge about proper matters in life ;
- (2) Jews no longer a chosen people ; (3) Priests of Judaism got

affected adversely ; (4) Adverse view taken by the Roman administration ; (5) Crucifixion of Jesus Christ (30 A.D.).

E. THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY

(1) **The Twelve Apostles.** (2) **Saint Paul.** Out of the Twelve Apostles. he exerted much to spread Christianity, founded churches in the cities of the Roman empire ; was put to death in 67 A.D. by the Roman government. (3) **Saint Thomas.** Converted king **Gondopharnes** (19-45 A.D.) of North Western India to Christianity ; also spread Christianity in South India. (4) **Work of other Apostles and Priests.** Because of their work Christianity spread in all the parts of the Roman empire by the 3rd century A.D. In 392 A.D. it became the official religion of the Roman empire ; (5) **Religious Administration of Christianity.** From the village clergies to the Pope of Rome.

F. IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIANITY

Christianity's principles of human equality and morality improved the tone of the moral life of the people of the different parts of the world.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Give an account of the origin of Christianity, and examine the causes which led to its growth in its early centuries.

2. Write notes on :

(i) Jesus Christ ;

(ii) John the Baptist ;

(iii) Causes for the rise of Christianity ;

(iv) Works of St. Paul and St. Thomas to spread Christianity in the world.

3. Did Christianity spread all over Asia before 1000 A.D. ?
Substantiate. (B. U. April, 1973)

OUTLINE

- A. Arabia Before the Rise of Prophet Muhammad**
 - B. Rise of Prophet Muhammad and Islam**
 - C. The Principles of Islam and the Duties of its Followers**
 - D. The Arabian Empire**
 - E. The Arabian Polity**
 - F. Science in the Arabian Civilization**
 - G. Arabian Literature and Learning**
 - H. Arabian Architecture**
 - I. Arab Trade and the Transmission of Knowledge**
-

**A. ARABIA BEFORE THE RISE OF PROPHET
MUHAMMAD**

(1) **The Land—Arabia.** Arabia is a country in the south-western part of Asia between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. It is a peninsula connected with both Africa and Asia.

(a) **Its Topography.** The large extent of the territory of Arabia is rocky and barren. Only a few fertile regions of it are dotted here and there in the valleys of small streams or around oases. 'Arab' means 'arid' (barren); and from that word the word **Arabia (a barren land)** got formed.

(2) **The People of Arabia.** Since ancient times the tribes of the Semitic race people dwelt in Arabia.

Out of those tribes, the tribe of the Arabs called as the Bedouin or the Saracen was a powerful one in Arabia. They were nomads and herdsmen who earned living by plunder.

(3) **Social Life.** In the Arabian society there existed the rich and the poor people. Large number of people were poverty stricken and they were ill-treated by the rich. Trade was the major activity of the people. The Arabs were a quarrelsome people

who fought wars in between themselves even on smaller grounds. This wasted their strength and talent. Therefore they had become incapable to achieve anything of higher merit.

They also did not give good treatment to the women. The lot of the women in the Arabian society was miserable.

The Arabian people used to drink liquor and indulge in gambling.

(4) **Religious Life.** In the religious matters, the Arabs were a backward people. They worshipped the stars, moon, sacred stones, etc. To win God's favour they offered animal sacrifices. The Arabs had a custom of not fighting wars for four months in a year. That period was regarded by them as a 'Truce Period'. During the days of the 'Truce Period', they visited the temple of Kaaba (a Black Meteoric Stone) which was at Mecca. The holy city of Mecca was their home of old cult and centre of pilgrimage. Another place of their worship was Medina.

At these places of worship and pilgrimages, the priests charged high fees to the people to perform animal sacrifices and other ceremonies. By that they had become a rich class of people in the Arabian society. Their attention was focused more on amassing money than on giving higher spiritual knowledge to the people.

B. RISE OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD AND ISLAM

(1) **Prophet Muhammad (577-632 A.D.).** When Arabia was experiencing the evils of polytheistic idolatry, loose morality, tribal warfare and political disunity, there was born in it in 570 A.D. a child named Muhammad to poor parents.

Muhammad lost his parents early and he was brought up by Abu Talib, his uncle. In young age, Muhammad used to accompany the trade caravans crossing the Arabian deserts. At the age of 25, Muhammad married a rich Arabian widow whose name was Khadija. From her he got his daughter, Fatima.

In a settled life which he enjoyed after his marriage with Khadija, Muhammad pondered over the state of affairs present in the Arabian society. Because of his trade activity, Muhammad had come in contact with the people of Judaism and Christianity and he was very much influenced by their idea of One God and the principle of human brotherhood. He thought that the introduction of those ideas in the life of the Arabs would improve the course of their life.

(a) **Ideas of Muhammad to Improve Arabian Life.** With a view to improve the life of the Arabian people, Muhammad started preaching against idolatry and evil practices which were present in the Arabian society. He told the people that God had sent him message to establish a new religion.

(b) **Reaction of the Priests of Old Religion.** When Muhammad preached against idolatry and the evil practices present in the Arabian society, he was given a following by some of its members. Instead of appreciating their good motives to improve the life of the Arabs, the priests of the old religion of Arabia called Muhammad and his followers as heretics. They also took measures to persecute them.

(c) **The Flight of Muhammad From Mecca to Medina and The Hijra Era (15th July, 622 A.D.).** The persecution conducted by the priests of the old religion of Arabian brought the life of Muhammad in danger. Due to that situation, Muhammad fled from Mecca to Medina on 15th July, 622 A.D.

This flight of Muhammad is called as “Hijira” and it is regarded an event on which Islam is founded in the world. As a result of this, the Muslim rulers followed an Era which started from the traditional date of the flight of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina, i.e., 15th July, 622 A.D. This date has been adopted as the beginning of Muslim Era by the followers of Islam.

(d) **Muhammad’s Conquest of Medina.** With the help of his followers Muhammad conquered Medina in 622 A.D. Muhammad proclaimed himself as the King of Medina. He organised there the **Commonwealth of Islam** by welding together his followers who had come with him from Mecca and the people of Medina. He called those people to worship in sacred union in the mosque. Before their gathering, Muhammad proclaimed his new faith Islam—“the surrender”, “to make peace”. Its adherents came to be known as the Muslimin or Moslems—“the surrendering ones”, those who have made their peace with God”. Muhammad who was the king of Medina, also proclaimed himself as the **Prophet of Allah, the One God**, who was to be worshipped by the followers of Islam.

C. THE PRINCIPLES OF ISLAM AND THE DUTIES OF ITS FOLLOWERS

(1) **The Principles of Islam.** The principles of Islam as preached by Prophet Muhammad have been recorded by his followers in the Holy Book **Koran**—a Bible of Islam. Those principles are

as follows ;—(i) Belief in One God, Allah ; (ii) Belief in the Angels of the Allah ; (iii) Belief in Allah's Prophet, Muhammad, the last of the prophets ; (iv) Belief in Allah's revealed books, of which the **Koran** is the last and the only one necessary ; (v) Belief in God's predestination (belief that all things have been foreordained by God) which determines the fate and the actions of men ; and (vi) Belief in the Day of Resurrection.

(2) **The Fundamental Duties of a Follower of Islam.** Prophet Muhammad also gave definite duties to the follower of Islam. They are—(i) The recitation of the profession of faith ; (ii) Attesting the unity of God and the mission of Muhammad ; (iii) the five daily prayers ; (iv) the fast in the month of Ramzan ; (v) the pilgrimage to Mecca ; and (vi) the Holy war.

(3) **Islamic Ethics.** In the Koran are stated the laws which Prophet Muhammad formulated to guide the morals of his followers. Those laws or rules are for the manners, hygiene, marriage, divorce, the treatment of children, slaves, animals, commerce, politics, interest, debts, contracts, will, industry, finance, crime, punishment, war and peace.

According to those rules, the follower of Islam is required to help the poor and to spend a portion of his income in charity and hospitality. He is required to give kind treatment to the widows, orphans and the sick. He is asked to show respect towards his parents. He is required to treat his neighbours with brotherly feelings.

Similarly, the follower of Islam is not to indulge in gambling, drinking wine and in the worship of idols. He is asked to avoid filthiness and falsehood. The rules also ask the follower of Islam to spread his faith—Islam—even by sword if necessary.

Prophet Muhammed told his followers that the spirit of man is immortal. He also told them that only the followers of Islam will get a place in the Heaven whereas the people of other religions will get a place in the Hell after their death.

(4) **Importance of Islam.** The principles and the ethics of Islam raised the spiritual and moral level of the Arabian people. Arabia, which was full of politically disunited idolatrous tribes at the time of the initiation of Islam got transformed into a nation in a short period of time. Islam gave the knowledge of the principles of human brotherhood and the worship of only One God to the people of Arabia, Asia Minor, Egypt, Mesopotamia and

Persia. As a result of the spread of the knowledge of those concepts, the morality of the people of those countries increased.

D. THE ARABIAN EMPIRE

Prophet Muhammad—the King of Arabia (632 A.D.). Prophet Muhammad was a great commander and an administrator. After becoming the king of Medina, he improved its administration and gave it a better set of rules and regulations to rule over the subjects.

He also trained his army properly and in 630 A.D. conquered the Holy city of Mecca. He then made the people of Mecca accept his new religion, Islam. In the place of the temple of Kaaba, Prophet Muhammad built a mosque for prayer retaining the stone of Kaaba in it.

After establishing his religious and political power firmly at Mecca and Medina, Prophet Muhammad exerted to bring all the people of Arabia under his power. Defeating all the Arabian tribes by 632 A.D., he emerged as a supreme king of Arabia. At the time when he transformed Arabia into a nation of a united people, he died in 632 A.D.

(2) **The Orthodox Khaliphate (632-661 A.D.).** The sudden death of Prophet Muhammad in 632 A.D. left the followers of Islam in Arabia in confusion as he left no son and had not designated a successor. But the problem was solved by the followers of Muhammad. They elected **Abu Bakr**, the father-in-law of Prophet Muhammad, as their **Khalifa (Deputy or Representative of Prophet Muhammad)** of Islam. Abu Bakr was elected as the first Khalifa by the followers of Prophet Muhammad as during his lifetime, he had chosen Abu Bakr to conduct the prayers in the mosque of Medina.

But the choice of Abu Bakr was not liked by Ali, the husband of Fatima, the daughter of Prophet Muhammad. Ali who was an orphan Son of Abu Talib, the uncle of Prophet Muhammad, was also an adopted son of Muhammad. Ali's resentment was shared by Abbas, the uncle of both, Ali and Muhammad. Because of this disagreement between the rival parties, emerged in the history of Arabia a number of wars, an Abbasid dynasty and the division of Islam into the Sunni and the Shia sects, in its subsequent history.

For some period, even though clashes took place between the rival parties, finally the position of Abu Bakr got set-

tled down and he became the first Khalifa of the "Othodox Khilaphate" (632–661 A.D.). The term "Orthodox Khilaphate" is applied by the Muslim historians to indicate the rule of Abu Bakr and his three successors, Omer I, Othman and Ali, and to distinguish this first phase of the Khilaphate.

(i) **Khalifa Abu Bakr (632–634 A.D.).** As the Khalifa (Deputy or Representative of Prophet Muhammad), he was the head of the religious and political matters in Arabia. After reducing to obedience the rebellious Arab tribes, Abu Bakr established political order in Arabia. He was a kind but resolute ruler. He personally attended the details of his civil and judicial administration.

(ii) **Khalifa Omer (634–644 A.D.).** He was a friend and chief adviser of Abu Bakr. As Omer was a man of great capability, he was named as the Khalifa by Abu Bakr who died in 634 A.D.

Khalifa Omer conquered Syria, Persia and Egypt. On the payment of tribute he guaranteed to the conquered people security and protection of property. He also allowed them the free exercise of their religion.

When a Persian slave struck him down while Omer led the prayers in the mosque, he, on his death-bed, appointed a council of six men to choose his successor. After his death, that council chose Othman, a member of the Omayyad family of Mecca as their next Khalifa in 644 A.D.

(iii) **Khalifa Othman (644–656 A.D.).** During his rule, the Arabs conquered the island of Cyprus. The creation of an Arab fleet was the most important achievement of his reign. It managed to defeat the fleet of the Western ruler of the kingdom of Constantinople in 655 A.D.

Khalifa Othman was assassinated because of the dissatisfaction of his troops in 656 A.D.

(iv) **Khalifa Ali (656–661 A.D.).** Othman was succeeded by Khalifa Ali who was the cousin and son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad. But Ali's claim to the Khilaphate was disputed by the old companions of Prophet Muhammad and the prophet's wife, Aisha. Khalifa Ali put down their revolt. After that, Khalifa Ali was opposed by Muawiya, the Omayyad governor of Syria, who demanded revenge for the murder of his kinsman, Khalifa Othman. When fighting between Khalifa Ali and Muawiya for the claim to Khilaphate was going on, Khalifa Ali was murdered by his own

followers in 661 A.D. This brought to the Khilaphate, Muawiya, a member of the Omayyad family. He founded the Omayyad Khilaphate in Arabia in 661 A.D.

(3) **The Omayyad Khilaphate (661–750 A.D.).** (i) **Khalifa Muawiya (661–680 A.D.).** To oppose him, the supporters of Khalifa Ali proclaimed **Hasan**, Ali's eldest son, as the Khalifa. But when Muawiya threatened to attack him **Hasan** abdicated. Khalifa Muawiya changed his capital from Medina to Damascus. He extended the Arabian rule in North Africa, Afghanistan and parts of Central Asia.

Khalifa Muawiya died in 680 A.D. and was succeeded by Yazid, whom he had proclaimed as his successor in 676 A.D.

(ii) **Khalifa Yazid I (680–682 A.D.).** His claim to the Khilaphate was challenged by **Husein**, the second son of Khalifa Ali. But in 681 A.D., Husein, with his followers, was slain, in the **battle of Karbala** by the troops of Khalifa Yazid I.

(a) **Division of Islam into the Shia and the Sunni Sects (681 A.D.).** The massacre conducted by the troops of Khalifa Yazid I of Husein and his supporters at Karbala in 681 A.D. divided the followers of Islam into the **Shia** and the **Sunni** Sects.

(a) **The Shia Sect.** The Muslims of this sect regard that Prophet Muhammad wished that his son-in-law, Ali, should succeed him. Therefore, they regard that the first three Khalifa of the Orthodox Khilaphate—Abu Bakr, Omer and Othman—were interlopers (intruders) and regard Khalifa Ali's death at the hands of Muawiya in 661 A.D. as a martyrdom, and Ali as a holy martyr.

The members of the Shia sect revere Ali's tomb and celebrate **Passion-plays** in his honour every year.

At Karbala, where Husein fell, the members of the Shia sect constructed his tomb. Every year, they re-enact there the tragedy in a passion-play and worship the memory of Ali, Hasan and Husein.

Since the "**Party of Ali**" is called in the Arabic language as "**Shi at Ali**", it came to be known as the **Shia Party** or the **Shia Sect** in Islam. The event of the massacre of Husein and his followers at **Karbala**, led their supporters to oppose severely the Omayyad Khilaphate in Arabia.

(b) **The Sunni Sect.** The members of the Sunni sect of Islam

follow the **Sunna** (orthodox tradition) and the **Koran**. They accept the four **Khalifas** of the Orthodox **Khilaphate** who followed Prophet Muhammad. The Sunnis, "**those of the path**", are the **traditionalist or orthodox Muslims**.

(iii) **Successors of the Khalifa Yazid I (682-750 A.D.)**. The history of the successors of Khalifa Yazid I is full of civil wars, rebellions, and depositions of the rival persons who contested their claims to become the Khalifa. But in spite of these matters, the reigning Khalifas exerted to extend the boundaries of the Arabian empire in Asia and Europe.

(a) **Areas of the Arabian Empire and the Spread of Islam**. During this period (682-750 A.D.) the new areas brought in the Arabian empire were : Tangier in north western Africa (683 A.D.) ; Carthage in North Africa (698 A.D.) ; Transoxania, Bokhara and Samarkand in Central Asia (712 A.D.) ; Sind and part of Punjab in India (711 A.D.) ; and the Iberian Peninsula (ancient name of the Spanish-Portuguese Peninsula in Europe). In these parts of the world, the spread of Islam also took place.

Thus by 713 A.D, the territory of the Arabian empire stretched from India in the East to Spain in the West. The onward march of the Arab conquerors halted in Europe only when they were defeated in the battle of Poitiers (Tours) in South France by the leader of the Frankish tribes, Charles Martel, in 732 A.D.

In 750 A.D. came to an end the Omayyad Khilaphate and its rule was replaced by the Abbasid Khilaphate.

(4) **The Abbasid Khilaphate (750-1100 A.D.)**. The Abbasid Khalifas were fortunate as they inherited from the Omayyad Khilaphate the vast Arabian empire. Therefore they could enjoy power and prosperity and could undertake the work of furthering the higher interests of human civilization and culture. Out of the Khalifas of the Abbasid Khilaphate who achieved eminent glory and fame was Khalifa **Harun Al Rashid**.

(i) **Khalifa Harun Al Rashid (785-809)**. (a) **Good Commander**. Harun Al Rashid was a man of great courage and generalship. He annexed Kabul and Sanhar of Central Asia to the empire in 787 A.D. When the subjects of Asia Minor revolted against him, he personally led the army in that area and established order in it.

(b) **Good Administrator**. Harun Al Rashid loved order and efficiency. Therefore he organized his government machinery on proper lines. The governors of the provinces of his empire were

under his strict control. To maintain a hold on their provincial matters Harun Al Rashid got all the provincial capitals linked with his capital city Baghdad.

He also personally supervised the working of Finance, Justice, Communications, Military, Public Works and the other departments of his government. Due to his personal supervision of the work of the government, the officers were vigilant in attending the grievances of the subjects.

As Harun Al Rashid granted impartial and speedy justice, he earned repute as a just judge. He was kind, affectionate and helpful to the poor who suffered at the hands of the rich and strong persons.

(c) **Great Patron of Learning and Arts.** Harun Al Rashid was himself a great scholar. Therefore, in his court at Baghdad, he gave patronage to the Persian and Arabian scholars, lawyers, astronomers, musicians and poets. He lavishly bestowed gifts upon the poets of skill, imagination and talent. He himself was a good poet.

In his court Harun Al Rashid also gave patronage to the dancers, physicians, grammarians and artists, and encouraged their arts and science.

He made Baghdad a beautiful city by constructing in it artistic public buildings, mosques and palaces. Harun Al Rashid took the care to develop learning and education in his subjects. Therefore, he started at Baghdad schools and colleges in which the students of the distant parts of his empire came for instructions.

(d) **Richest and Powerful Sovereign of his Age.** During the reign of Harun Al Rashid, the Arabian empire had immense wealth. In its treasury, money got poured through taxes, trade, plunder, war booty and tributes. That made Harun Al Rashid maintain a luxurious court.

Together with possessing immense wealth, Harun Al Rashid possessed great military strength to protect his empire against the attacks of the enemies. He guarded well the vast frontiers of his empire. As he loved friendship with other rulers, he maintained good foreign relations with Charles the great, the mighty Western ruler of France.

(e) **Reign—A Golden Period of the Arabian Civilization.** As under Harun Al Rashid, the Arabian People enjoyed peace, prosperity, glory, power and progress in learning, arts and sciences, his reign is regarded as a period of Golden Age of the Arabian civilization.

(f) **Ideal Muslim Ruler.** As Harun Al Rashid showed great concern for the welfare of his subjects and as he was a ruler of benevolent activity, he was regarded by the Arabian scholars, writers and thinkers as an ideal Muslim ruler. Therefore, the author of the famous book, "**The Arabian Nights**," has given in it the stories of the generous, humanitarian and mighty deeds of Harun Al Rashid.

After achieving great glory, Harun Al Rashid died in 809 A.D.

(ii) **Successors of Harun Al Rashid (809-1058 A.D.).** After the death of Harun Al Rashid, his empire was divided by his noblemen, who became independent rulers in Syria, Egypt, Persia, Mesopotamia, etc. The successors of Harun Al Rashid were weak and suffered from the evils of excessive wealth.

(iii) **Arabian Empire under the Turks and Mongols.** In 1058 A.D. after defeating the weak successors of Harun Al Rashid the Seljuk Turks became the masters of the Arabian Empire. Due to that, the Khalifa lost all political power but he continued as a religious head.

In 1258 A.D. the Mongols of Central Asia conquered Arabia and after putting the Khalifa to death became masters of that land.

E. THE ARABIAN POLITY

Polity means the form or method of government of a nation.

(1) **Form of the Government.** (i) **Republic (632-661 A.D.).** Theoretically, the Islamic government during the period of the Orthodox Khilaphate (632-661 A.D.) was a democratic republic in the sense that all free adult males chose the ruler and determined the policy. For that government, the people chose the commander of the Faithful (Khalifa) as its head. The policy of that government was decided by a small group of the notables in Medina.

(ii) **Monarchial (661 A.D. Onwards).** As the Arabian government undertook the activity of expanding its political territories and thereby effect the spread of Islam, the nature and the form of that government changed. To suit to the needs of warfare it was necessary to have a unity of command and a facility to take quick decision. This promoted one-man rule in the working of the democratic republic in Arabia and by 661 A.D. that government became monarchial in form. The headship of the government and the Khilafat came to be transmitted by succession or trial of arms.

(2) **The Khalifa.** The head of the Arabian Government was the Khalifa. As the head of the followers of Islam, his primary duty was to defend that religion. In theory, the Khilafate was a theocracy, that is, a government by God through religion.

But the Khalifa had no power to issue new decrees of the faith. Even though he enjoyed, in practice, absolute power, he was required to use it according to the injunctions and contents of the Holy Book, **Koran**.

(3) **The Administration.** After conquering a vast empire which spread from river Sindhu in India in the East to Spain in the West, the Arabs had become political masters of the seats of the great ancient civilizations which had started declining.

To organise their vast empire, the Arabs continued the old government administrative pattern set by Darius the great of Persia, to govern over the Eastern part of their empire. Similarly, to govern over their Western part of the empire, they continued the methods of administration of the rulers of Constantinople (Byzantine empire) which had been, earlier to the Arabian rule, prevalent in the life of the people of those areas.

This continued the old order of life in the areas of the earlier great ancient civilizations.

To manage the affairs of the administration of their vast empire, the Khalifas of the Abbasid Khilaphate evolved a complex system of central, provincial and local government. It was managed by a bureaucracy of permanent officials. It was largely of a constant type and did not get interrupted even if there was a change in the headship of the Arabian Government.

At the head of the administrative structure existed an officer called as the **Chamberlain or hajib**. He managed the ceremonies and controlled the visits of the people to the Khalifa.

The **Vizer** was another important officer in the administration who appointed the officials in the government and supervised their work. He also guided the policy of the state.

The Arabian government had the departments of taxation, accounts, police, correspondence, post and a department of attending grievances of the subjects in the matters of the decisions of the judicial and administrative departments.

The departments of army and of finance were the most important ones in the Arabian Government and hence they were always under the personal supervision and direction of the Khalifa.

The department of the public post transmitted intelligence and directives between the provinces and the capital.

There also existed in the Arabian Government the department of Spies or "Intelligence". The department collected information about the affairs going on of the important persons in the empire and of the happenings in the area of the empire through its own officials and through the private parties like the merchants, travellers and pilgrims.

Justice was given in the Arabian empire on the basis of the principles, customs and traditions of Islam stated in the Koran. Due to this, since the law and religion were one and the same thing, the offenders and criminals were awarded severe punishments by the judges of the Arabian empire.

With the help of this government administration, the Khalifas of the Arabian civilization gave an orderly, good and efficient rule to their subjects. Due to their measures during 632-1058 A.D. condition of peace and order largely existed in the Arabian empire. Their taxation schemes were good and those brought the government large sums of money. That money was wisely spent by the Khalifas to restore and construct roads, encourage agriculture and industry and give rewards to the men of learning and merit. They created irrigation facilities to promote agriculture and followed a policy to develop industries like gold, silver, copper, steel, leather, medicine, paper, glass, etc. All these measures of the Khalifas developed the interests of science, literature, arts and architecture during the period of the Arabian civilization.

F. SCIENCE IN THE ARABIAN CIVILIZATION

(1) **The Arabian Spirit to Learn from Others.** The Khalifas of the Arabian empire were aware about the backwardness of the Arabs in science. They had also a bent of mind to learn better matters of life even from the conquered people. Due to this reason, they did not destroy the Christian and Persian colleges of Alexandria, Beirut, Antioch, Harran, Nisibis and Jund-i-Shapur, after conquering the areas in which they were situated. They also preserved the schools in their empire, in which existed the works of Greek science and philosophy.

(2) **Translations of the Works into the Arabic Language.** The Khalifas of the Arabian civilization were lovers of learning, science and arts. They had understood that there existed a rich stock of valuable knowledge in the Greek, Persian and Sanskrit languages. To make their own people of Arabia rich in learning

and the stock of knowledge, they sponsored the activity of getting the works of different languages translated into the Arabic language. By that the Arabian scholars absorbed in their way of life, the stock of knowledge developed by all the earlier great ancient civilizations.

(a) **Mamun the great (813-833 A.D.).** He was the Khalifa of the Abbasid Khaliphate who vigorously sponsored the activity of getting the works in the Greek, Persian, Syriac and Sanskrit languages translated into the Arabic language and thereby absorb the stock of knowledge of other civilizations into the Arabian way of life.

He gave liberal endowments for the study of arts and sciences. He constructed two observatories, one near Baghdad, and the other near Damascus, to promote the study of astronomy. At Baghdad, Mamun the great established **A House of Knowledge** as a scientific academy, an observatory and a public library. In it he appointed a large number of translators to translate the works of the other languages into the Arabic.

This activity laid down the foundations of a brilliant development of different sciences in the Arabian civilization.

(3) **Development of Sciences.** The Arabian scientists conducted detailed experiments and discovered many new matters in the field of different sciences.

(a) **Chemistry.** In the science of chemistry after studying the properties of different substances, the Arabian scientists discovered new substances like the Nitrate of Silver and Potash. They also discovered the Sulphuric Acid and Nitric Acid. The Arabian scientists prepared salts of mercury and alum.

(b) **Physics.** The Arabian scientists investigated and tabulated the specific gravities of different metals.

They investigated the laws of Optics dealing with the reflection and refraction. The Arabian scientists discovered and employed pendulum for time-measure.

(c) **Botany.** The Arabian scientists collected specimens of the plants available in different parts of Arabian empire. They studied the structure, functions and classifications of these plants.

(d) **Mathematics.** The Arabian mathematicians developed algebra to second degree equations. They also invented the tangent and the cotangent in trigonometry.

(e) **Medicine.** The Arabian physicians had studied the

symptoms and diagnosis of different diseases and gave treatment for their cures. The Arabian physicians prepared medicines by using camphor, cloves, mercury, senna, etc., and made their use in the treatment of different diseases. They also made the use of rose water and the jellies of different fruits in the treatment of diseases. The Arabian physicians had achieved a great skill in the treatment of the diseases of human eyes. Their system of medicine is known as the **Unani system of medicine**.

At Baghdad and in other big cities the Khalifas had established Public Hospitals to give medical treatment to their subjects.

(f) **Geography.** The Arabian geographers, with the help of their knowledge in physics and mathematics, made accurate measurements of latitude and longitude. They wrote descriptive geography and deduced principles of the science of geography.

(4) **Absorption of the Chinese Scientific Discoveries.** As a result of their trade activity, the Arabian people came in contact with the people and the scientists of China. From the Chinese scientists they learnt (i) the manufacture of paper; (ii) the manufacture of gun powder; (iii) the technique of the block printing press; and (iv) the mariner's compass.

These discoveries were transmitted by the Arabs to the people of Europe during the period of the Crusades (religious war between the Christians and the Muslims during 1095–1291 A.D. When in the subsequent period, the Europeans practised those discoveries, their way of life got changed and they became a Modern People.

G. ARABIAN LITERATURE AND LEARNING

(1) **Literature.** Writers of the Arabian civilization have made a rich and substantial contribution in literature. They loved poetry, ballads, fables and stories of travel, adventure, valour, impartial justice, virtue and merit. Arabian writers of skill, therefore, wrote brilliant masterpieces of stories and poetry. Out of such masterpieces the **Arabian Nights**, a book of stories; and the **Rubaiyat**, a work of poetry by **Omar Khayyam**, are most noteworthy.

(i) **The Arabian Nights.** It is the book of stories written by an unknown Arabian author. It is felt by the scholars that on its different stories there exists an influence of the stories of the **Panchatantra**, a work in the Sanskrit language written by the scholars of ancient India. Similarly some of its stories seem to have on them the influence of the literature of the ancient Chinese and other civilizations.

The stories of the Arabian Nights narrate proverbs and the adventures of virtuous and straightminded heroes. The fables of the Arabian Nights communicate a moral to the readers so that they may learn things of wisdom and shrewdness. The stories of Sindbad the Sailor; Aladdin's Lamp, and Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves, given in the Arabian Nights, have entertained the people of different countries even up to the present day.

Harun Al Rashid (785-809 A.D.), the most glorious Khalifa of the Abbasid Khaliphate, is the hero of some of the stories of the Arabian Nights. In those stories, his exertions to secure the welfare of the subjects and to give impartial justice to the people are narrated. Some scholars feel that while narrating the virtues and noble actions of Harun Al Rashid, the author of those stories has explained to the readers as to how an ideal Muslim ruler should be.

The Arabian Nights is translated in most of the languages and is the most popular book in the world.

(ii) **The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.** The celebrated Persian Poet, Omar Khayyam (? -1123 A.D.) has attained a world wide fame for his work of poetry, the **Rubaiyat**.

Omar Khayyam, who was also an astronomer and mathematician of great note, has composed about 75 **quatrains** [Poems having a stanza of four lines] known as the **Rubayas**. Those **Rubayas** are collected together in the book which is known as the **Rubaiyat**.

In his poems, Omar Khayyam has stated the course of tragic-life which Man experiences in the world. Through those poems, he has shown that the fond desire of Man to live a life of tender and idealistic sentiments and expectations gets defeated finally in the hard realities of the World.

He says that in the young age, Man feels that he should enjoy life in the company of his beloved ; in the pursuit and enjoyment of finer literature—Poetry; and drinking; This is clear from his poem in which he says :—

“Hear with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.”

As the picture of such fond human wishes is found in the poems of Omar Khayyam, people popularly believe that he is a romantic poet. But when read properly, his poems reveal that

Omar Khayyam's philosophy of human life is "not the philosophy of happy people but of unhappy people".

Omar Khayyam tells through his poems that the hard realities of the World deny to Man the realization of his fond desires. He points out that :—

"The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face
Lighting a little Hour or two—is gone."

About the worldly life of Man, only one thing has certain to Omar Khayyam. It was this—"Life Flies" *i.e.* Death. For he says :—

"Oh come with old Khayyam and leave the Wise
To talk, one thing is certain, that Life flies ;
One thing is certain, and the Rest is Lies :
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies."

The thoughts about human life in the world which are embodied in the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam have a universal appeal. For, every one of us is destined to suffer in the world—sometime or the other.

(2) **Learning.** Since the Arabian Khalifas valued learning, they built centres of learning like Baghdad, Cairo, Cordova, Seville and Barcelona.

At those centres, they established big libraries. The library of Cordova had in it four lakh volumes of different subjects. At those centres, the Khalifas engaged great men of learning to translate into the Arabic the works written in the Greek, Persian and Sanskrit languages. As a result of this, the knowledge of different subjects and sciences got preserved in Asia when it was getting destroyed in Europe because of the raids of the barbarian people. When after the fall of the Roman empire in 476 A.D. the lamp of human knowledge got extinguished in Europe because of the destruction carried out by the barbarians of the seats of learning, the Arabian people not only preserved that stock of knowledge in the Arabian language but took the care to develop it. That knowledge was learnt by the Europeans during the period of the Crusades. The acquirement of that knowledge transformed the life in the West and it became modern.

H. ARABIAN ARCHITECTURE

The Arabian people were of keen artistic sense. Therefore,

they borrowed many ideas from the people of other earlier civilizations in the matter of architecture.

From the people of Spain, the Arabians borrowed the **Horse Shoe Arch** and used it to construct their beautiful buildings. Similarly, borrowing the use of **Dome** from the Persian architects, the Arabs used it to beautify their mosques, palaces and the public buildings. To beautify their buildings, the Arabian architects also invented and practised the use of the **Minarets**. They used in the construction of the buildings plaster, glass and designs and made them look colourful and artistic.

MAIN POINTS

I. ARAB TRADE AND THE TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE

(1) **The Arab Trade.** The people of Arabia were basically traders of great acumen and skill. They earned their living mainly by trade. Earlier to their rise as a world power, the trading activity of the Arabian people was restricted to the area of Arabia and to the lands adjoining to it.

But when during the period of 632–750 A.D., the Arabian conquerors built up a vast empire extending from the river Sindhu in India to Spain in Europe, the Arabian trade got transformed into a world trade.

The Arabian traders traded with India, China, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Persia, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Egypt, Carthage, Cyprus, Crete, Aegean Islands, Greece, Italy, Sicily, Spain and Central Europe.

Whatever the best material they found in a country, they transported it to the other country to earn good profit. While conducting trade with those countries, the Arabian traders learnt best of the matters of every country and transmitted that knowledge to the people of other countries while carrying out trade transactions in those countries. Thus Arabian trade proved to be a vehicle through which the knowledge and the contents of the ancient civilizations passed from one country to the other one. This resulted in building up a common stock of knowledge in science, literature, arts, religions, crafts, etc., in all the countries of the world in the days of the lack of the means of communications. As a result of this, human life in most of the countries in the world during the period of the Arabian civilization was well informed, progressive and rich.

(2) **The Transmission of Knowledge.** The Arabs took the orange tree from India and introduced it in Arabia, Syria, Asia

Minor, Palestine, Egypt and Spain. The Arabs also took the sugar-cane and the knowledge of the refining of sugar from India and passed it on to Arabia and Europe. The Egyptian cotton was introduced by the Arabs in Europe. The textiles of superb quality of Persia, Syria and Egypt were introduced by the Arabian traders in India and European countries.

While carrying on their trade activity the Arabs picked up the immortal pieces of Indian literature like the **Panchatantra** and the **stories of Vikramaditya** and spread their knowledge in the other countries of the world. From India they learnt **philosophy**, the **use of zero** in Mathematics and transmitted that knowledge to others. Similarly, they gave the knowledge of their religious philosophy, arts, crafts, sciences and architecture to the people of other countries.

As a result of the gains which accrued to the world in building up a common stock of knowledge though the agency of the Arabian trade, the people of the Arabian civilization are regarded as the "Messengers of human civilization and culture" in the history of the mankind.

MAIN POINTS

A. ARABIA BEFORE THE RISE OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD

(1) **The Land—Arable.** (a) **Its Topography.** The land is unfertile. (2) **The People of Arabia.** Of the Semitic race. (3) **Social Life.** The rich exploited the poor; women were not treated properly. **Religious Life.** People worshipped idols; offered animal sacrifices to gods.

B. RISE OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD AND ISLAM

(1) **Prophet Muhammad (570-632 A.D.).** (a) **Ideas of Muhammad to Improve Arabian Life.** (b) **Reaction of the Priests of Old Religion.** (c) **Flight of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina and The Hijra Era (15th July, 622 A.D.).** (d) **Muhammad's Conquest of Medina.** Became king of Medina and founded Islam: proclaimed himself as the Prophet of Allah.

C. THE PRINCIPLES OF ISLAM AND THE DUTIES OF ITS FOLLOWERS

(1) **The Principles of Islam.** (2) **The Fundamental Duties of a Follower of Islam.** (3) **Islamic Ethics.** (4) **Importance of Islam.**

D. THE ARABIAN EMPIRE

- (1) Prophet Muhammad—the King of Arabia (632 A.D.).
 (2) The Orthodox Khilaphate (632–661 A.D.). (i) Khalifa Abu Bakr (632–634 A.D.). (ii) Khalifa Omer (634–644 A.D.). (iii) Khalifa Othman (644–656 A.D.). and (iv) Khalifa Ali (656–661 A.D.).
 (3) The Omayyad Khilaphate (661–750 A.D.). (i) Khalifa Muawiya (661–680 A.D.) ; (ii) Khalifa Yazid I (680–682 A.D.).
 (a) The Shia Sect. (b) The Sunni Sect. (iii) Successors of Khalifa Yazid I (682–750 A.D.). (a) Areas of the Arabian Empire and the Spread of Islam. (4) The Abbasid Khilaphate (750–1100 A.D.). (i) Khalifa Harun Al Rashid (785–809 A.D.) ; (a) Good commander ; (b) Good Administrator ; (c) Great Patron of Learning and Arts ; (d) Richest and Powerful Sovereign of His Age ; (e) Reign—A Golden Period of the Arabian Civilization and (f) Ideal Muslim Ruler. (ii) Successors of Harun Al Rashid (809–1058 A.D.). (iii) Arabian Empire under the Turks and Mongols.

E. THE ARABIAN POLITY

Polity means the form or method of government of a nation.

- (1) Form of the government. (i) Republic (632–661 A.D.). ; (ii) Monarchical (661 A.D. onwards). (2) The Khalifa. (3) The Administration.

F. SCIENCE IN THE ARABIAN CIVILIZATION

- (1) The Arabian spirit to learn from others. (2) Translation of the works into the Arabic language ; (a) Mamun the great (813–833 A.D.). (3) Development of Sciences ; (a) Chemistry ; (b) Physics ; (c) Botany ; (d) Mathematics ; (e) Medicine ; and (f) Geography. (4) Absorption of the Chinese Scientific Discoveries.

G. ARABIAN LITERATURE AND LEARNING

- (1) Literature. (i) The Arabian Nights ; (ii) The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. (2) Learning. Khalifas established centres of learning at Baghdad, Cairo, Cordova, Seville and Barcelona. Got Greek, Persian and Sanskrit works translated into the Arabic. Preserved knowledge when it was getting destroyed in Europe at the hands of the barbarians.

H. ARABIAN ARCHITECTURE

To beautify buildings, Arab architects made the use of the dome, Horse Shoe arches and the Minarates in their construction.

I. ARAB TRADE AND THE TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE

- (1) The Arab Trade. In all the countries from India to Spain

and China. (2) **The Transmission of Knowledge.** Arab traders introduced Indian fruit trees and literature of Ancient India in other countries. In the countries with whom they traded, they introduced Persian, Egyptian and their own material sciences, arts, literature and architecture.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Write notes on :—

- (i) Arab contribution to Literature and Science ;
- (ii) Prophet Muhammad ;
- (iii) Role of the Arabs as the absorbers and transmitters of knowledge in the world.

2. Give an account of the origin of Islam, and explain the causes that led to its rapid spread during the first century of the Muslim Era.

3. Explain the main teachings of Islam and assess its impact on mankind.

4. Give an account of the teachings of Prophet Muhammad and give reasons for the spread of Islam.

5. Explain how Prophet Muhammad created a sense of unity among nomadic Arabs and founded the Arab State.

(B. U. April, 1973)

6. Did the Arabs achieve anything new in the fields of Science, Mathematics, and Medicine ? What is the main contribution of the Arabs to the civilization in Asia ?

(B. U. April, 1973)

7. Describe in brief the Arabian System of Medicine.

(B. U. April, 1973)

8. Explain what the **Arabian Nights** teaches us about the Arabs.

(B. U. April, 1973)

9. Did Islam spread all over Asia before 1000 A.D. ? Substantiate.

(B. U. April, 1973)

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